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# MOTORSPORT NEWS

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## BEHIND THE WHEEL OF A PUKKA WRX BATTLER

We go all-electric in  
our track test **p18**



## THE BIG QUESTIONS OF FORMULA 1 2022 ANSWERED

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epic season **p12**



## HOW ROVANPERA DEFIED CONVENTION IN THE WRC

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# RED BULL LINKED TO FORD ENGINE DEAL FOR FORMULA 1



Ford is poised for F1 return

**Blue Oval tipped  
for a sensational  
return to grand  
prix racing  
from 2026**

By Matt James

Ford is rumoured to be eyeing a sensational comeback to grand prix racing in a tie-up with champion Red Bull.

The giant car firm has not been represented in the top-flight for almost two decades, but sources are suggesting that the Blue Oval could be considering a joint venture with Red Bull when the new F1 powerplant regulations come on stream in 2026.

Red Bull has been seeking a partner since talks with Porsche broke down earlier this year, and the increased interest in grand prix racing in the USA is thought to have gained the attention of the top brass at Ford.

Red Bull team principal Christian Horner said: "We are fully focused on a Red Bull power unit, and if there was a like-minded partner that could contribute something to the project, then of course you would have to absolutely consider that."

Red Bull is eyeing a deal with Blue Oval

Full story, page 4

## INSIGHT

## TACKLING AN EPIC ADVENTURE

Tony Jardine's New Zealand  
marathon, **page 20**



## RETRO

## RECALLING A ONE-MAKE MONSTER

Looking back on the BMW  
Procar series, **page 22**





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FIND OUT MORE



COMMENT

Photo: mcklein-imagedatabase.com, Red Bull Content Pool, Ben Lawrence, Motorsport Images, Mad Angles



Toyota Yaris driver Kalle Rovanperä will be hunting for more success throughout 2023

KEEPING THE BALL ROLLING IN 2023

**T**his season will be remembered as a year of some significant benchmarks. Firstly, Kalle Rovanperä ripped up the form book in the World Rally Championship by belying conventional wisdom by winning the title while barely out of his teens, while Max Verstappen put together a season reminiscent of Ferrari and Michael Schumacher in their pomp.

In this issue, we reflect on both the World Rally Championship and the grand prix season and our experts answer the big questions of the campaigns just gone.

While those are now committed to the record books, fans are left looking ahead to try and answer the posers that 2023 will inevitably throw up. Will Rovanperä be able to maintain his hot streak? Will Ott Tänak's return to M-Sport be the boost that the British team needs?

Can new team principal Frederic Vasseur put Ferrari back on the right track in Formula 1? And will Mercedes put the nightmares of 2022 behind it and give Lewis Hamilton the chance to battle for a record-breaking eighth title?

These are the imponderables that keep us all engaged with the sport we love and that is why, as soon as one season is put behind us, we are eagerly awaiting the next one.

Elsewhere in this issue, we are grateful to the Hansen World RX Team for letting our man Hal Ridge loose in a very rare outing for media in the cutting edge of technology that has revolutionised the discipline in 2022. Hal, thankfully, followed all the instructions from the Swedish team and brought the Peugeot 208 RX1e back in one piece, and you can read his thoughts on pages 18-19.

While the World Rallycross Championship underwent something of a revolution in 2022 with its all-electric format, it wasn't alone in breaking new ground. There was new hybrid technology in the World Rally Championship that went without a hitch, and the electric power boost was also added to the British Touring Car Championship hardware. It also proved a big success and shows that nothing stands still in motorsport.

Again this is another reason to enjoy the sport we all love.

In our Christmas special, Tony Jardine gives us the lowdown on his early Xmas present, which was an attack on the truly epic Silver Fern Rally in New Zealand. The broadcaster and pundit's diary can be found on pages 20-21. David Addison looks back in time and recalls the BMW M1 Procar battles too on pages 22-23.

We hand-pick our personal memories of the year on pages 30-35, and they are accompanied by some of the best photography of the season just gone by our highly skilled snappers. It is all here to enjoy.

We hope you have a happy holiday period and don't forget to go out and buy your next edition of Motorsport News, which is published on January 5.

Matt James

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MOTORSPORT NEWS

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Tony Jardine's ultimate test

Our man details his epic trip to the Silver Fern Rally in New Zealand



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Recalling the BMW M1 Procar monsters

We examine what was probably the ultimate one-make racing series

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Memories: our selection of photos of the year

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# RACING NEWS



Horner is seeking a partnership



Ford's last presence was with Jaguar in 2004

## FORD LINKED TO ENGINE DEAL WITH CHAMPION RED BULL

Blue Oval bosses eyeing F1 return with increasing US interest in grand prix racing

By Matt James

**Rumours have linked Ford to a surprise comeback to grand prix racing and a possible partnership with Red Bull Racing.**

The Blue Oval was last involved with F1 through the ownership of the Jaguar team from 2000 until 2004, but after some poor results, the operation was sold to Red Bull.

An increasing interest in grand prix racing in the United States is thought to

be behind Ford's renewed enthusiasm for the top-flight, although bosses of the car firm are not keen to take outright ownership of a team.

Ford would rather link up with an existing operation, and the title-winning Red Bull Racing team fits the bill perfectly. Red Bull has created its own powertrain division and is currently working alongside Honda, but that relationship is due to end at the end of 2025 on the eve of new powerplant regulations.

Red Bull was in talks with Porsche, but the German firm's desire to acquire a sizeable shareholding in the team meant the deal fell apart.

Ford could join forces with Red Bull as a branding exercise, thus limiting the liabilities and costs involved, and it would be able to offer its expertise in various technical areas. Ford would not want a stake of Red Bull Racing, which would suit the bosses of the Milton Keynes outfit.

Earlier this year, Red Bull team boss

Christian Horner said: "We are fully focused on a Red Bull power unit, and if there was a like-minded partner that could contribute something to the project, then of course you would have to absolutely consider that. But it's not a prerequisite.

"We will be the only team other than Ferrari to have engine and chassis all on one campus under one roof. We believe that for the long-term competitiveness of the team, it is absolutely the right thing to be doing. And of course, there are other opportunities it presents as well."

## PATTERSON SECURES TEAM HARD BTCC DRIVE FOR 2023

Teenager Dexter Patterson will race for Team Hard in the British Touring Car Championship in 2023 in a Cupra Leon.

The Scottish racer, 19, made his tin-top debut with the Laser Tools Racing team in an Infiniti Q50 in 2022 and finished 23rd in the standings with three points-paying outings. He will join Jack Sears Trophy winner Bobby Thompson in the Kent-based team after testing the hatchback in November.

The former Formula 4 racer said: "Switching to the Cupra Leon was a no-brainer for me after the test I completed in November; the car felt really positive and provided me with a baseline that I can work with over the winter to move up the field and challenge for the Jack Sears Trophy.

"Joining Bobby, who has previous experience in the car, is going to really help me settle into front-wheel-drive machinery for the first time and I can't wait to get out there and get more miles under my belt."



Patterson has Team Hard seat



Vasseur will lead the Scuderia

## VASSEUR CONFIRMED AS NEW FERRARI CHIEF

Ferrari bosses believe new team principal Frederic Vasseur will be able to bring out the most from the team and its drivers after the Frenchman was named a Mattia Binotto's replacement last week.

Binotto tendered his resignation after a troubled 2022 when the Italian team failed to unlock the full potential from its car. Vasseur, the former boss of the ART Grand Prix team, switches over from Alfa Romeo's grand prix attack. He

has previously worked as team principal at Renault.

Ferrari CEO Benedetto Vigna said: "Throughout his career he has successfully combined his technical strengths as a trained engineer with a consistent ability to bring out the best in his drivers and teams. This approach and his leadership are what we need to push Ferrari forward with renewed energy."

The appointment of Vasseur was

welcomed by Ferrari's lead driver Charles Leclerc, who worked with him at the Alfa Romeo Sauber team in 2018.

"I've been working with Fred already from the junior categories, where he has believed in me, and then we've always had a good relationship," said Leclerc. "But apart from that, obviously this shouldn't influence any of the decisions. He has always been very straightforward, very honest."

## SCHUMACHER JOINS MERCEDES IN TEST ROLE

Outsized Formula 1 race driver Mick Schumacher has inked a deal to become the Mercedes reserve driver in 2023.

The German, who lost his seat with Haas at the end of 2022, will conduct simulator work and will be on stand-by if he is needed to replace either of the regular drivers, George Russell or Lewis Hamilton.

The 23-year-old, a Formula 2 and Formula 3 Euro champion, said: "I am committed to give it my all to contribute to their performance in this very competitive and professional environment.

"I take this as a new start, and I am just

excited and grateful to Toto and everybody involved for putting their trust in me. F1 is such a fascinating world, and you never stop learning, so I look forward to absorbing more knowledge and putting in all my efforts for the benefit of the Mercedes team."

Merc boss Toto Wolff added: "He is a hard worker, has a calm and methodical approach and is still hungry to learn and improve as a driver. These are all important qualities."

Ferrari has also confirmed that Schumacher was no longer part of its young driver academy.



Schumacher (left) will now act as an understudy at Mercedes-Benz



Capito has split with Williams

## ALL CHANGE AT WILLIAMS AS CAPITO STEPS DOWN

Williams has confirmed that the team's chief executive officer Jost Capito has left his role with the squad, and technical director Francois-Xavier Demaison has also parted ways with the operation.

Capito, who previously headed up Volkswagen's successful attack on the World Rally Championship, joined Williams shortly after it was bought

by Dorilton Capital group two years ago. No reasons have been given for either man's departure.

In a statement, Dorilton Capital chairman Matthew Savage said: "We would like to thank Jost for his hard work and dedication as we embarked on a major transformation process to begin the journey of reviving Williams Racing.

"We're grateful that Jost postponed his planned retirement to take on this challenge and now he will pass the reins on for the next part of this staged process."

Capito also issued a statement, which read: "It has been a huge privilege to lead Williams Racing for the last two seasons and to lay the foundations for the turnaround of this great team."



Seidl has a new job with Audi

## SEIDL TO PREPARE AUDI'S F1 ENTRY

Andreas Seidl will take up a new role as the chief executive of Audi's forthcoming Formula 1 programme.

The former McLaren man will join the Alfa Romeo Sauber team, which will become Audi in 2026, in January. His position at McLaren will now be filled by the squad's executive racing director Andrea Stella.

Sources suggest that Seidl's role will be to oversee an improvement in performance from the current outfit to make sure that Audi is in a competitive position when it joins the grid at the same time as the new engine regulations come into effect.

The former Porsche motorsport head, who worked with the Swiss team from 2006 to 2009, said:

"This is a team with a rich history in Formula 1 and an organisation I know really well from my time working and living in Hinwil for four years."

McLaren driver Lando Norris tweeted that it had been a pleasure to work alongside Seidl. He said: "I've never seen our team looking as strong as it is now and some of that is credit to the work you've done."



# RACING NEWS



Smith to single-seaters

## FIESTA CHAMP SMITH JOINS FOX GB4 EFFORT

Reigning Fiesta Junior champion Sid Smith will race in Fox Motorsport's all-new GB4 championship line-up in 2023.

In addition to his title-winning Fiesta campaign this year, 16-year-old Smith also raced in three late-season Ginetta Junior events with Fox, taking an overall top-10 finish on his freshman weekend.

Smith, son of Le Mans class winner Rob, will make his single-seater debut next year in GB4 where at Fox he will race alongside fellow Ginetta Junior graduate Liam McNeilly and an intended third driver.

Smith said: "Having the experience of racing the Ginetta and getting used to rear-wheel-drive is already a huge help and having done a few events with Fox Motorsport means I've built some key relationships. I now have plenty of time to step up my physical and mental preparation."

Fox team principal Paul McNeilly added: "[Smith's] progress since stepping into a Ginetta Junior car has been rapid and the experience of hugely intense pack racing and rear-wheel drive has been hugely important in adding to what he's learnt in Fiestas."

## KARTING STAR STEPS UP

Teenage karting star Gabe Fairbrother will make his car racing debut in the Mini Challenge Trophy's 2023 season with the Excelr8 squad and intends to challenge at the front.

Fairbrother this year won in the Junior Rotax class at the Kartmasters Grand Prix and in the Ultimate Karting Championship. His move to the British Touring Car Championship-supporting contest is part of his longer-term vision of a GT career.

He said: "I see the Cooper class as the ideal place to go in this next stage of my career and I'm going into 2023 with my focus firmly on challenging towards the front of the grid – I don't want to be there to just make up the numbers. It's important for me to be able to work with a team that can help me work towards my longer-term goals and that's exactly what Excelr8 can do with the JCW [Mini] and Porsche [Carrera Cup] programmes."



Teenager has big ambitions

# WEBSTER FIRST GB4 SIGNING FOR DEBUTANT EVANS GP

## Single-seater race-winner is Australian squad's opening driver recruit for planned two-car GB4 entry in the 2023 season

Photos: Evans GP, Jakob Ebrey.



Webster has a strong track record



Evans GP expands to the UK after starring in Formula Regional Asia

By Graham Keilloh

**Australian team Evans GP will join the GB4 championship grid in 2023 and has confirmed frontrunning S5000 driver Cooper Webster as the first recruit for its planned two-car entry.**

The open-wheel specialist squad finished sixth in this year's Formula Regional Asian Championship teams' standings, having finished second in the previous year's table in its freshman campaign.

Evans GP has established a UK base and alongside Fox Motorsport plus

privateer Dylan Hotchin (*see p41*) joins the MotorSport Vision Racing-run junior single-seater GB4 championship's grid for the contest's second season in existence in 2023.

Nineteen-year-old Webster from Kilmore, Victoria, is a multiple race-winner in the Australian S5000 single-seater championship and finished third in this year's standings and second in its Tasman Series, where he outperformed Formula 1 star Giancarlo Fisichella. Webster also is a member of Red Bull's esports team.

Team founder Josh Evans said: "[GB4] looks to be a great racing environment

for talented young drivers wanting to compete at a realistic budget level. The professionalism of the series and how it is promoted is second to none.

"One of our team aims is to create a seamless transition for Australasian drivers wanting to launch their careers onto the European racing scene."

Webster added: "It's an amazing opportunity to race in the UK on some world-class tracks and against some top drivers. For sure it will be a big challenge, but I am ready to give it everything."

"The Evans team has a successful track record so I think we can achieve some good results together."



British F4 star Cresswell (r) is aiming high in GB3 after Elite switch

## CRESSWELL GB3 TITLE AIM WITH ELITE MOVE

McKenzy Cresswell is aiming for 2023's GB3 championship title after sealing a switch to Elite Motorsport from Chris Dittmann Racing for his second season in the single-seater category.

Cresswell – who spent his early life in Austin, Texas – in British Formula 4 in 2021 with JHR Developments took an unmatched number of wins and fastest laps on his way to a close third in the final standings.

However the 16-year-old then had a tricky first GB3 season this year

with CDR, finishing 11th in the championship with a single podium finish.

He now is confident of an upturn in form next year in new surroundings at Elite, which finished third in both the drivers' and teams' standings this year with four race wins for Tom Lebbon.

Cresswell said: "I wouldn't be coming back to this championship unless I had what it takes to win. With a year under my belt, a strong team, and the right car beneath me, my goal is the championship title."

# TEAM BRIT LAUNCHES C1 ROOKIE PROJECT

Team Brit has unveiled a new rookies' racing project via which it will field two entries for disabled and LGBTQ+ drivers in the Citroen C1 racing series from 2023.

Team Brit competes in British GT and Britcar and provides a pathway for disabled drivers. In the C1s' low-cost endurance series it will enter a pair of four-driver teams, one representing LGBTQ+ drivers and the other made up of disabled drivers. The programme's drivers will get professional coaching, tuition, testing and support throughout the season.

Four drivers are already confirmed: Team Brit rookie Anji

Silva-Vadgama, who lives with multiple sclerosis, her wife Asha Silva who has ADHD and autism, Yvonne Houffelaar, an experienced sim racer who has scoliosis, and her partner Sophie Aeronwen who is autistic.

Team Brit founder Dave Player said: "[This] will add another step on our ladder of motorsport development for disabled drivers."

"Adding the C1 championship to our race calendar means that drivers who are just starting out in the sport can enter a professional and hugely popular championship at entry level, with the support and guidance they need to develop."



All-disabled Team Brit is adding another rung to its ladder in C1s



# RALLY NEWS

# WILSON COUNTS ON TANAK TO MAKE PERMANENT SIGNING LOUBET A STAR

*M-Sport head hopes Estonian can train Frenchman just like Ogier trained Tanak*

Photos: mcklein-imagedatabase.com



Loubet is aiming to fly with M-Sport

By Graham Lister

**Malcolm Wilson wants history to repeat itself by handing Pierre-Louis Loubet a full-time drive in the World Rally Championship.**

Loubet has signed up to contest the entire 13-round season in a Ford Puma Rally1 run by Wilson's M-Sport squad.

And Wilson has drawn parallels between Loubet and Ott Tanak, who will lead M-Sport's WRC attack in 2023 after agreeing to return to the Cumbrian outfit. "I have full confidence in him and feel this year's performance has shown he has all the ingredients to go far in this sport," Wilson said. "I am hopeful that working alongside Ott, Pierre will develop and learn in the same way Ott did in 2017 alongside [Sebastien] Ogier."

Loubet, the son of 1989 European champion Yves, finished fourth twice from seven starts in an M-Sport Puma in 2022 after a season of struggle in a semi-works Hyundai in 2021.

The Corsican famously led the Acropolis Rally in September after claiming back-to-back stage wins but dropped out of contention with a day-two puncture.

Despite previously suggesting that he didn't have the funding for a complete season, Loubet will embark on his first



Loubet: echoes of Ott Tanak

full campaign with new co-driver Nicolas Gilsoul.

"The full season takes off a lot of pressure because I know that I have 13 events to give me [the] chance to show all my potential, and gives me the space to grow and learn," said the WRC2 champion. "My most important goal will be to finish every event, to gain experience and learn to know where we can push and go for maximum speed."

"To be an official driver and scoring manufacturer points for M-Sport is something I have always wanted, I am so pleased that M-Sport is believing in me like this. A huge thank you to Malcolm and Rich [Millener] who have done fantastic work for me. I'm so pleased to be working with M-Sport again, and to work alongside Ott as team-mates is something very special."

## GILSOUL IMPRESSED BY LOUBET'S "DRIVING SKILL"

Co-driver Nicolas Gilsoul will tackle his first World Championship season since 2020 when he links up with Pierre-Louis Loubet at M-Sport.

The Belgian finished runner-up in the 2013 WRC standings alongside Thierry Neuville during their first and only

season with the British team.

After spending seven years together at Hyundai, Gilsoul walked away on the eve of the 2021 campaign and has made only one WRC start since when he co-drove Gino Bux to 13th on the Ypres Rally in August.

"It's fantastic to come back to

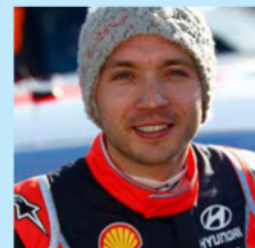
M-Sport exactly 10 years after my first time as vice champion," said the 40-year-old Gilsoul. "It was probably my favourite year, we showed great speed and a lot of top memories."

Gilsoul and Loubet joined forces for the first time on a French regional rally earlier this month

and ran second in a Ford Fiesta Rally2 before retiring with a mechanical issue.

"I am very happy to be back in the WRC, especially with a really good package, a young, promising driver, top car and World champion team-mates," said Gilsoul. "I met Pierre-Louis last

year during a training camp in France. At that time he was in a tough situation and I have been impressed by his mental strength to be able to show his speed, especially this year. We did a national rally together and straight away I felt his driving skill was enough to convince me."



Gilsoul is a huge fan



Solberg will return to a Rally2 machine in 2023

## OLIVER SOLBERG STEPS BACK TO GO FORWARD AGAIN

Oliver Solberg will return to Rally2 after securing a WRC2 comeback with the Skoda-supported Toksport team.

The 21-year-old spent two seasons as a factory Hyundai driver but was left without a seat when his contract wasn't renewed.

Although he had been linked to a

Rally1 programme with M-Sport, it is understood there was a clash between Solberg's personal sponsor Monster Energy and M-Sport backer Red Bull.

However, the Toksport deal provides Solberg with an opportunity to get his promising career back on track in the all-new Fabia RS Rally2 with Briton Elliott Edmondson signed

up to co-drive for a second season.

Solberg has nominated February's Rally Sweden as his first WRC2 scoring round but will contest next month's Monte Carlo Rally opener.

He said: "Everybody knows how competitive WRC2 is and it's fantastic to be there. The new Fabia RS Rally2 is the car everybody has

been talking about. I tested it for the first time in France and was really impressed. Straight away I could feel comfortable with the car and confident in the feedback."

"I was also really happy with Toksport, it's like working with a factory team. Competing with them in 2023 is going to be great."

## KOVALAINEN IN FOR THE LONG HAUL

Ex-Formula 1 driver Heikki Kovalainen has moved a step closer to making his Rally Finland debut by joining the Secto Automobile Labs team for a Finnish championship bid in 2023.

After making his WRC debut on Rally Japan last month, Kovalainen said that tackling more rounds at

World level would appeal.

Although Rally Finland doesn't form part of the national championship roster, the calendar is designed to encourage as many Finnish drivers take part on their World Rally Championship home round, which is sponsored by Secto Automotive.

While Kovalainen will

compete in the headlining SM1 division alongside co-driver Janni Hussi, Justus Raikkonen, nephew of Kimi, will represent the Secto Automobile Labs team in the SM3 category.

Jari-Matti Latvala's former co-driver Miikka Anttila will support the project in an advisory capacity.



Ex-F1 man's full attack

## NEW NAME FOR WRC2 JUNIOR

The WRC2 Junior title is no more with WRC2 Challenger taking its place on the World Championship support bill in 2023.

It follows a change to the eligibility criteria, which will now be based on driver experience rather than imposing a maximum age limit.

Only drivers who have not won a support championship

title or have not been nominated to score manufacturer championship points will be eligible, with governing body the FIA hoping that more inexperienced drivers will sign up to take part as a result.

Brit Chris Ingram was an early WRC2 Junior title contender in 2022 with overall WRC2 champion Emil Lindholm landing the Junior title as well.



New moniker for Junior

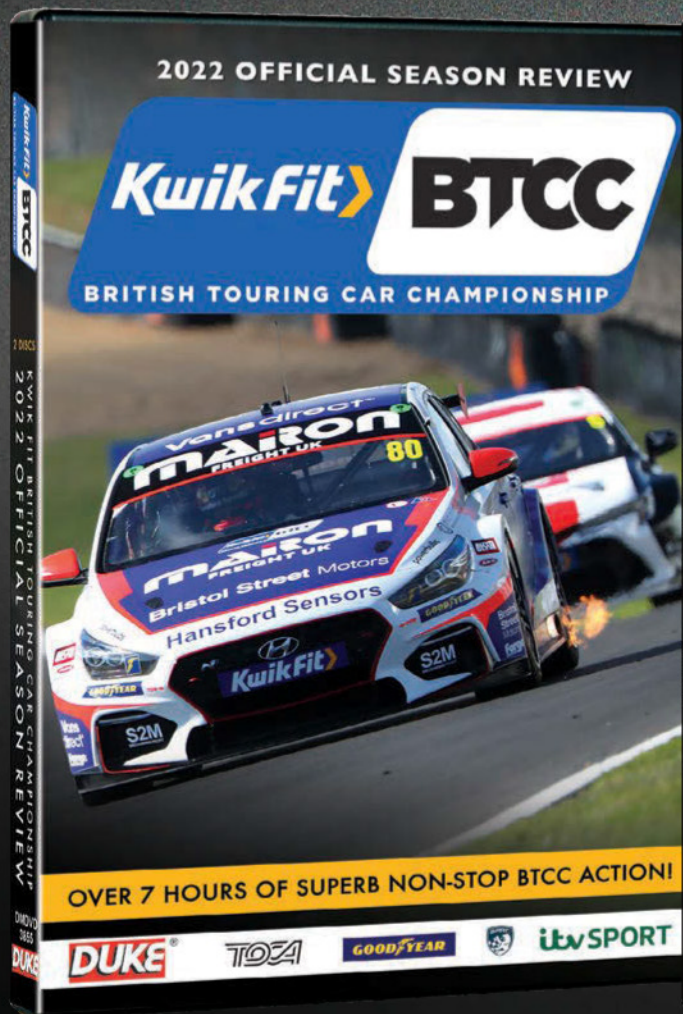
The FIA has also tweaked the WRC2 Masters class by allowing Rally3, Rally4, Rally5 and RGT cars to also compete and renaming the category WRC Masters. RGT Cup is now axed.



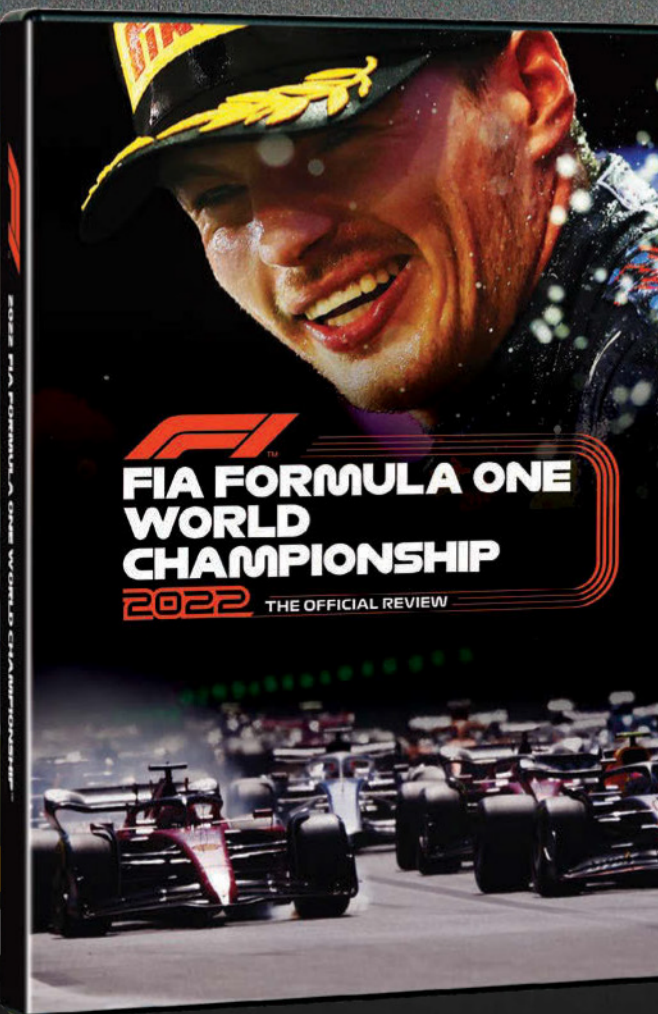


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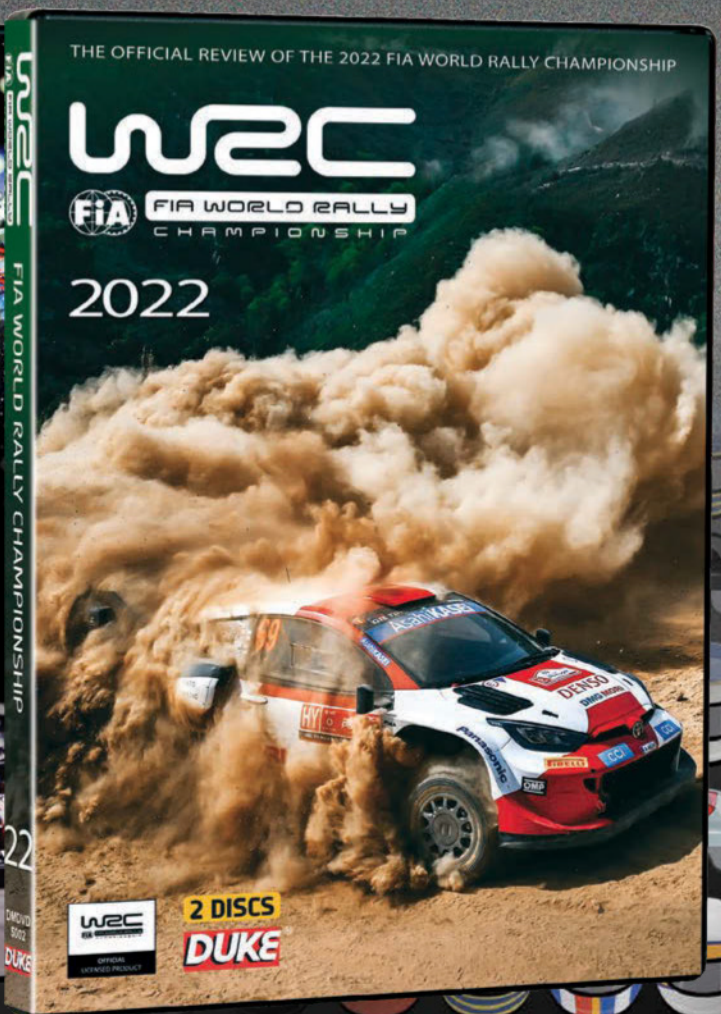
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# RALLY NEWS

Photos: Ben Lawrence

## O'BRIEN PLANS VARIED 2023 CAMPAIGN DESPITE AWARDS LOSS

European outings are on the radar next season for Northern Irish rising star



O'Brien has loyal support for 2023

By Jason Craig

**Northern Ireland's Patrick O'Brien says the fact he missed out on the 100,000 Euro prize for the Billy Coleman Award has not impacted on his plans for next year.**

O'Brien and Kyle McBride were pipped to the prestigious prize by Eamonn Kelly. While the cash

boost would have made budgeting much simpler for 2023 O'Brien, the reigning Irish Forestry champion, does not believe it will hold him back.

"I had a basic outline of what I wanted to do in 2023 and it has not really changed," said the 25-year-old, who has been beaten to the Billy Coleman Award three times now. "My sponsors and backers still

have great faith in me, so I will use their support to supplement that programme next season. I am still part of the Motorsport Ireland Rally Academy. I never had the 100,000 Euro prize so I never accounted for it in my planning to be honest, so I've not arrived at a point where I have had to revise anything," he added.

O'Brien intends to stick with his Skoda Fabia R5 for a varied

campaign, starting with February's Galway International Rally.

"I may do a round or two of the British Rally Championship but I don't think I will commit to any championship next year," O'Brien said. "Right now, I am aiming for the first round of the FIA European Rally Championship in Portugal, Rally de Fafe. I will see how that goes and pick and choose from there."



Mackay will look to boost his skills

### MACKAY COLLECTS THE JOHN EASSON AWARD

Scottish youngster Johnnie Mackay has been named as this year's John Easson Award winner, scooping the award and £6000 to put towards his 2023 season.

"It's very special, I'm over the moon," Mackay told Motorsport News. "When you look back at all the people that won it in the past, it's not bad to have my name alongside them! It's UK rallying's most prestigious award for young drivers so it means a lot. It's just a great way to wrap up the year."

His plan was always a full Scottish Rally Championship season in 2023 in a Mitsubishi Lancer E7, aiming to win the Challengers title. But Mackay will put the extra backing towards testing and tuition to boost his progression.

### TINKLER MEMORIAL CANCELLED

The stage rally planned for the Teesside Motorsport Park on December 27 has been cancelled due to lack of entries.

Darlington and District Motor Club had planned to run the Harry Tinkler Memorial Rally over the Christmas break but didn't get to the minimum number of entries needed to make the event viable.

The 10-stage event had been intended to pay tribute to the memory of respected race and rally official and organiser Harry Tinkler but will now not go ahead.

## MORE AWARDS FOR PROTYRE ASPHALT CONTENDERS

New awards for the best under-25 driver, the best two-wheel-drive car and an increase in classes for historic cars are further developments for the Motorsport News-supported Protire Asphalt Rally Championship.

Questmead will support awards for the best young

driver while the Nicky Grist award will go to the highest placed two-wheel-drive car in the overall championship standings. Dynamic Fluids will continue to support the award for the best presented car, as judged by the championship scrutineers.

Meanwhile, series co-ordinator Paul Morris

is hoping to attract more historic cars to the championship and believes that a well-driven historic could claim a high overall position in the final reckoning.

Morris said: "We're delighted to confirm ongoing support from our partners and are fortunate to have a number of

our competitors supporting the championship through their businesses. We will shortly publish the championship regulations and hope to improve on the 50 drivers that we had registered for the 2022 season."

The seven-event, eight-round season starts in late February with the East Riding Stages Rally.



Atkinson: top U25 runner

### ROAD RALLY ROUND-UP

#### TURNER MAKES IT FIVE VICTORIES ON A TOUGH TEST ON THE PRESTON

Owen Turner secured his fifth Preston Rally win and navigator Andy Ballantyne made it two victories on the legendary Chelmsford MC event.

The pair finished ahead of the field on one of the toughest editions of

East Anglian rally as the numerous tracks used were covered in ice throughout.

Top seeds John Davies and Nick Bloxham led until shortly before the first petrol halt, but then their Puma broke a bottom arm which pulled out the driveshaft and

they went no further.

Turner/Ballantyne then moved to the front and maintained their advantage until the finish. Until the later section they were under pressure from Chris and Jamie Woolley and the BMW crew were within seconds of

the lead until falling back towards the end. They took the runner-up spot, ahead of Ethan Davies and Mathew Smalley.

The novice crew of Joe Philpott and Colin Brand finished in fourth but would have taken the overall win if

they hadn't booked into a time control early. This error added five unnecessary minutes to their total.

The Mel Harris Memorial Rally in South West Wales was called off just over an hour before the first car was due to start. Dangerously

icy conditions made much of the route impassable and there were concerns for the safety of marshals.

Ian Mills

#### Results

**The Preston Rally**

**Organiser:** Chelmsford Motor Club  
**When:** December 10-11 **Where:** East Anglia **Route:** 200 miles **Starters:** 58

1 Owen Turner/Andy Ballantyne (MGZR) 28m39s; 2 Chris Woolley/Jamie Woolley (BMW E30) +1m48s; 3 Ethan Davies/Mathew Smalley (Ford Puma); 4 Joe Philpott/Colin Brand (Honda Civic); 5 Mark Peterson/Alan Coombs (MGZR); 6 Justin Chapman/Emily Chapman (Peugeot 205 GTi); 7 Craig Varney/Alex Higgins (MGZR); 8 Rob Palmer/David Smalley (MGZR); 9 Peter Riddle/Jonathan Stimpson (MGZR); 9= Jon Bray/Ian Graham (MGZR). **Class winners:** Peterson/Coombs, Philpott/Brand.



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## SPORTING SCENE NEWS

# FERRIER AND PANIS SHARE THE SPOILS IN ANDORRA'S ANDROS TROPHY CLASH

Frenchmen sign off in style before mid-campaign break for ice-based series

Photos: Andros Trophy, Red Bull Content Pool, Paul Lawrence



Panis extended his points lead



Ehrlacher, winner Panis and Fourmaux on the rostrum

By Hal Ridge

The Andros Trophy ice racing series concluded the opening phase of its 2022-2023 winter season with a visit to Andorra and Christophe Ferrier and Aurelien Panis claimed the victory spoils.

As in the opening encounter at

Val Thorens a week before, the Andorran ice circuit adopted a rallycross-style joker lap but, unlike at Val Thorens, Ferrier got his weekend off to a better start.

Having struggled through the opening weekend of the campaign, the DRP driver won the qualifying stages ahead of Yann Ehrlacher.

Come the latter stages, it was

five-time champion Jean-Baptiste Dubourg who topped SuperPole to take pole position for the final and he drove to victory in the last race of the day. However, due to the points amassed in qualifying and finishing second to Dubourg in the final, it was Ferrier who took the overall win, ahead of Dubourg and Ehrlacher.

The layout of the circuit was changed for day two, making the lap significantly quicker, and it was 2019-20 champion Panis who dominated to extend his points' lead.

Top in qualifying, Sainteloc Racing driver Panis took a clean sweep, winning SuperPole and the final, having made the perfect start

in the last race of the weekend.

Ehrlacher shadowed Panis in qualifying, then ended up in a battle for track position with World Rally Championship driver Adrien Fourmaux in the final. The latter was competing in only his second Andros Trophy event.

Ehrlacher ultimately came out on top to secure second in the

series' fourth round, while Fourmaux claimed a maiden podium.

Sebastien Loeb Racing driver Dorian Boccia and touring car legend Yvan Muller battled in the final; Boccia eventually finished fourth. The series resumes on the first weekend in January at Isola 2000.



The format of the World Rallycross Championship will remain largely unchanged

## WORLD RX RETAINS MAIN ELEMENTS OF FORMAT FOR 2023

Full details of race format changes in the World Rallycross Championship for 2023 have been revealed.

In what is essentially a hybrid of the format introduced for 2022 and taking key elements from the format that used from 2014 to 2021, events will be run over four heats, leading to two six-car semi-finals and

a six-car final.

All races had been made up of five cars for the 2022 format, while the progression session introduced for the '22 season has also been dropped.

Grid positions in the heats will be determined by the finishing order in the previous session, as in the 2014-2021 format, and points will be

scored by the top three drivers at the end of qualifying, at the 'Ranking' stage.

Successful elements from the 2022 format remain, including the single-lap SuperPole session to determine the grid for heat one and the majority of points being scored at the end of the event, plus each race being run over five laps.

## BRADLEY HOPES FOR GOODWOOD CHANCE

Leading sprint and hillclimb competitor Damien Bradley says he'd love the chance to run his mighty Subaru Legacy at the Goodwood Festival of Speed after a record-breaking season.

Bradley has developed the Legacy into the fastest saloon car currently running regularly

in speed events and has extracted close to 1000bhp from the turbocharged four-wheel-drive car.

He has taken many awards during 2022, including the Shelsley Walsh Segrave Trophy for the biggest improvement on the class record standing at the

start of the season.

Bradley has won his class and set records at Cadwell Park, Hethel, Goodwood, Snetterton, Curborough plus at Saint Goueno in France. He also set the outright record at the Sandown sprint course on the Isle of Wight.

Bradley told MN: "I managed to win the Welsh Sprint and Hillclimb Championship and took their coveted 'hard charger' trophy too. Hopefully with all this we will have got the attention of the team at Goodwood for the Festival of Speed!"



Bradley is keen on a outing on the West Sussex hillclimb



# HISTORICS

## DOWN THE PUB

### EIFION JONES

Former leading co-driver  
Age: 68 Lives: Oswestry



Jones has lots of experience

### He started as a youngster

"I started in the 1970s on local 12-car events, then Motoring News night rallies and then stage rallies. I did a little bit of driving in a Mini Cooper S. I was OK but I wasn't of the speed of the people I was sitting with. So I knew my position. I sat with some pretty quick people, so I was very fortunate in that respect."

### He did a lot of rallies with Richard Gough

"I was meant to be doing an event with a chap called Mel Lewis who was doing the Welsh Championship at the time and he was hiring one of Phil Collins' Escorts but he sold the car in the week leading up to the event. Richard [Gough] hadn't got an entry and he rang me and said: 'Would it be OK if he took over the entry if I co-drove for him?' And that's how we got together. It was our first event and we won by a fair distance. So that's how we started for 14 or 15 years."

### They won regularly

"We had two Escorts before the ex-Ari Vatanen car that Richard still has and then we did a season in the Manta 400. We won his local rally, the Woodpecker, three times and I think we won about 30 rallies around the country. We won the Dukeries when people didn't think we were any good outside the local stages and we lost one in Scotland by two seconds."

### He sat with good drivers

"I was very, very lucky with some of the people I sat with. I was lucky enough to sit with John Price and his son Stephen and with Geoff Jones. I was with John in his 6R4. I did a number of Rally GBs but never had any luck, unfortunately. I did it in 1988 in a Sierra Cosworth with Roger Davies when we broke down on the final afternoon in the middle of Dalby. I did it a few times with Dave Humphreys in his Escort Cosworth and he was another very quick driver."

### He stopped in 1995

"I was suffering from a bad back and that was one of the problems. On the last rally I did in 1995 I hardly got out of the car. I was busy with work and that took over. I don't know if I'd like it as much now though: all that was on the maps of course."

# PEARSON TO FULFIL HIS DREAMS WITH A CHEVRON B8 BEAUTY

## Sportscar swap for historic ace after four decades of waiting

By Paul Lawrence

**Alfa Romeo and Historic Formula Ford racer Ted Pearson will fulfil a life's dream when he races a Chevron B8 next season.**

Pearson has acquired the ex-Barrie Smith/David Purley car and plans to race it in the Guards Trophy with Callum Grant sharing the driving.

Pearson told Motorsport News: "The first time I ever saw a B8, other than in a magazine, was at Donington in 1979. I'd wanted one ever since and it has taken 43 years to fulfil the dream. Chevron B8 racer Hugh Colman said that I would never regret it!"

The 1968 sports-racing car was bought new by Barrie Smith and raced successfully before being sold to David Purley for 1969 and 1970.



The David Purley Chevron will ride again

"That was another big tick for me because Purley was a big hero of mine," said Pearson.

It was later raced by John Raffo and Roy Seddon, including at the 1971 Targa Florio, and then went to David Brodie who took it to Guyana and sold it locally.

It sat unused for some time before being brought back to the UK in the early 1980s. The Chevron finally returned to racing a decade ago with Adam Singer but has not raced for several years.

"I came along, saw it and fell in love with it," said Pearson.

"It needs a recommission, not rebuild. Nigel Grant is masterminding that with Mike Waite, so it is going home to Bolton. I'd like to do Guards Trophy with Callum Grant to start with and then hopefully my son Tom when he's got a bit more experience."

## HIRVONEN SET FOR NEW ZEALAND CHALLENGE



Hirvonen (right) will be back in harness

After two false starts, former WRC driver Mikko Hirvonen will finally contest the Otago International Classic Rally in New Zealand.

Hirvonen was due to compete in the 2016 and 2020 events, but a calendar conflict and then the Covid pandemic kept him away from the Dunedin-based rally.

The Finnish ace, winner of 15 WRC rounds, will drive a Ford Escort Mk2 RS1800 on the April 1-2

event. In recent years Markko Martin and Mads Ostberg have both won the rally.

Hirvonen said: "I'm thrilled to have the opportunity to go to Dunedin. Being able to compete at the Otago Rally is something I've had on my wish list for a while and, until now, we've failed to make it happen. It will be great to get to grips with the Ford Escort and to experience all that the event has to offer."

## BUSY SCHEDULE FOR HRCR STAGE MASTERS

The Historic Rally Car Register has unveiled a 10-event, 12-round schedule for its 2023 Stage Masters Challenge.

The historic stage rally championship will cover both gravel and asphalt rallies, largely in Wales, and is poised to take over

the mantle of the Welsh Historic Championship, which will no longer run.

The Stage Masters schedule starts with Rally North Wales in late March and takes in five gravel rallies, all in Wales, and five asphalt events. The Manx Rally and Rali

Ceredigion will both be double-headers.

The calendar takes in the Three Shire Stages in September and concludes with the Wydean Rally in October. The championship will be co-ordinated by Martin Leonard.



Stage Masters will tackle Manx lanes

## GOODWOOD FOUNDER TO BE REMEMBERED



The Tony Gaze Trophy will run for GT cars that raced from 1948-54

The 75th anniversary of the opening of the Goodwood circuit will be marked by the Tony Gaze Trophy at the Members' Meeting in April.

Gaze was an Australian who flew Spitfires during the Second World War and was stationed at RAF Westhampnett in 1941. After the war, he returned to the airfield to suggest that the Duke of

Richmond used it for a race track. In 1952 he became the first Australian to race in the World championship, racing an HMW at Spa-Francorchamps.

Goodwood's founding father, who died in 2013 at the age of 93, will be remembered by the Tony Gaze Trophy for GT cars that raced between 1948 and 1954.

## IN BRIEF

### Edmund Peel RIP

MN was sad to learn of the death of sometime rally driver Edmund Peel at the age of 74. Peel was best known in rallying for campaigning a historic-category Porsche 911 from the Tuthill team and enjoyed regular outings in the British Historic Rally Championship, particularly on gravel rallies. His last competitive outing was on the Red Kite Rally in 2016. In his other life Peel was an acknowledged expert in fine art. However, his passion for cars started with owning an Aston Martin at the age of 18.

### R.A.C. on show

The Roger Albert Clark Rally Motor Club will have a stand at next month's Autosport International at the Birmingham NEC (January 12-15). The stand will offer visitors details about the club's historic rally championship as well as some early information about the Roger Albert Clark Rally (November 23-27).

### Brooklands dates

Brooklands has confirmed its 2023 motorsport dates, which focus on the Double 12 Weekend on June 17-18. Saturday's action will include a sprint on the Mercedes Benz World track while Sunday will feature demo race starts on the former finishing straight and climbs up the test hill at the famous Surrey venue.

### Cornish cream

Group B, Group A and early WRC rally cars will take park in the Watergate Bay sprint in Cornwall next September. The Ralli 22 movement has added the popular closed-road sprint to its 2023 calendar of speed events. The event will run over the weekend of September 16-17 near Newquay on the north coast of Cornwall.

### GTSCC winners

David Smithies and Chris Clarkson have been confirmed as overall winners in the GT and Sports Car Cup for 2022 after an exemplary season in their Daytona Cobra Coupe. The experienced Bristol pairing took the crown for their performances across the four-race GTSCC season. Other class winners included Richard and Alice Locke, with Alice also taking the Ladies' Cup in their MGB.

### Mount honoured

Racing scrutineer Chris Mount has been awarded Motorsport UK's prestigious Officiel d'Honneur for his services to the sport over nearly half a century. Mount started as a trainee at Mallory Park in 1972 and went on to be one of the UK's leading and most respected scrutineers. The award is made to officials retiring from active service in recognition of their outstanding contribution to the sport.

### End of the line

The Welsh Historic Rally Championship has been scrubbed for the foreseeable future following the conclusion of the 2022 season. The final champions were Ford Escort crew Mike Simpson and Dale Gibbons. With historic classes added to the gravel-based Welsh Rally Championship and the Welsh Tarmacadam Championship, support for a dedicated historic championship had dwindled.



## SEASON REVIEW

# THE HITS AND MISSES OF THE 2022 FORMULA 1 SEASON

**James Roberts** looks back on a campaign that gradually became a one-horse race

**T**his season was never going to top last year was it? And yet, back in February there was hope that the highly anticipated regulation changes would shake up the wheel-to-wheel action. But did it have the desired effect? For some the jury is still out.

There was a brief glimmer of hope that Ferrari would challenge Red Bull, but all-too-quickly Ferrari's season unravelled – due to driver mistakes, unreliability and strategic errors. It got only four victories from 12 pole positions and the team's failings have ultimately cost team boss Mattia Binotto his job.

The RB18 was the class of the field in Max Verstappen's hands, but the biggest surprise was the lack of pace in the Mercedes – and especially on Lewis Hamilton's side of the garage. The word of the year was 'porpoising' and it took a long time for the Brackley team to remedy its oscillating Silver Arrows.

There were other talking points too: Fernando Alonso's gutsy drives and surprise signing for Aston, Ricciardo's poor form and P45, a surprising debut from Nyck de Vries at Monza, a new race in Miami, a shock Haas pole, red flags in Japan and massive crowds at every race. To top it all, on the eve of Christmas, there was a seismic merry-go-round of team principals. So, grab that turkey sandwich and let's digest the highlights of 2022...

**'The Red Bull was the class of 2022'**

**Motorsport News**

## 1 FLASHPOINT OF THE YEAR: Sergio Perez, Monaco

We didn't realise it at the time, but six months on, qualifying at Monaco came back to haunt Red Bull and its race-winner Sergio Perez.

Heading to the Principality, Checo had lost out in qualifying to his World champion team-mate in five of the first six rounds. Then in the dying seconds of Q3 in Monte Carlo, Perez – with a 0.037-second advantage over Max – came into Portier, gave it a boot full of throttle and spun backwards into the wall.

Carlos Sainz, unsighted, hit the Red Bull and the track was blocked – red flag. Despite a Ferrari front-row, Perez was crucially ahead of Verstappen in third. And when the Ferraris inevitably screwed up on Sunday, it was Perez who took the win.

But did he crash deliberately? While the incident was brushed under the carpet, it suddenly came to light when Max refused to let Checo past on the final lap in Brazil. He was in no mood to help Perez claim second in the championship and the row rather unexpectedly blew-up in Red Bull's faces. It illustrated the needle that exists between the two racers...



Was the intra-team Red Bull warfare sparked when Sergio Perez bested Max Verstappen in Monaco?

### RACE BY RACE



#### 1 BAHRAIN GP

**Where:** Sakhir **When:** March 20

**1 Charles Leclerc (Ferrari)**

**2 Carlos Sainz (Ferrari)**

**3 Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes)**

The opening round was a nightmare for Red Bull with both Max Verstappen's and Sergio Perez's machines retiring with fuel-related problems. From pole position, Charles Leclerc controlled the race to lead home Ferrari team-mate Carlos Sainz. Lewis Hamilton brought his bouncing Mercedes home in third spot.



#### 2 SAUDI ARABIAN GP

**Where:** Jeddah **When:** March 27

**1 Max Verstappen (Red Bull)**

**2 Charles Leclerc (Ferrari)**

**3 Carlos Sainz (Ferrari)**

World champion Max Verstappen opened his account with a dramatic late-race overtake on Ferrari's Charles Leclerc. Carlos Sainz took third for Ferrari, while Sergio Perez was fourth after an ill-timed safety car robbed the poleman of a chance to win for Red Bull. Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes) recovered to 10th after being knocked out in Q1.

#### 3 AUSTRALIAN GP

**Where:** Melbourne **When:** April 10

**1 Charles Leclerc (Ferrari)**

**2 Sergio Perez (Red Bull)**

**3 George Russell (Mercedes)**

Pole position was a good omen for Charles Leclerc, who took his Ferrari to a clear victory. Red Bull's Sergio Perez battled his way back through the order to snatch second place from George Russell (Mercedes), who profited when the safety car was called for mid-race. Max Verstappen was in tyre trouble and then a fuel fire sprung on his Red Bull car and he was forced to park up.



#### 4 EMILIA ROMAGNA GP

**Where:** Imola **When:** April 24

**1 Max Verstappen (Red Bull)**

**2 Sergio Perez (Red Bull)**

**3 Lando Norris (McLaren)**

Sprint race winner Max Verstappen (Red Bull) completed a grand slam with pole, fastest lap and the race victory in the race, which had started wet. He led home team-mate Sergio Perez for Red Bull's first 1-2 since 2016. Charles Leclerc (Ferrari) was sixth after a spin, behind third-placed Lando Norris (McLaren).



Photos: Motorsport Images



George Russell was a winner at last

# 2 DRIVE OF THE YEAR: George Russell, Brazil

For sheer dominance, it's difficult to look beyond Max Verstappen's Belgian Grand Prix performance. He was in another class that day and dominated by a country mile. It followed his Hungaroring drive, which was also a masterclass.

But the drive that deserves a champagne toast was George Russell's display in Brazil to claim his long-overdue first grand prix victory. At no stage in those 71 laps was the Englishman allowed a breather as the pressure was heaped on from all sides.

Mercedes had yet to win a race all year and he had to withstand an inspired seven-time World champion Lewis Hamilton snapping at his heels.

The King's Lynn man not only out-raced his highly decorated champion team-mate at Interlagos, but also out-scored him by 35 points over the course of the year – so here's another drink for George.

Cheers: here is to many more.

# 3 RACE OF THE YEAR: Singapore Grand Prix

After a Covid-enforced hiatus of two years, Formula 1 returned to the floodlit streets of Singapore to reinforce the venue's place as one of the highlights of the season. There is a quality to Marina Bay that is unlike any other race.

The heat and humidity, the skyscrapers, the street food and the punishing barriers that take no prisoners if you make a mistake. Then there's the monsoon rain, thanks to the Lion City's location in the tropics.

One hour before the race was due to start, the heavens opened... and didn't stop. When the race eventually began, Sergio Perez again demonstrated his mastery of street circuits. Despite the slippery conditions and relentless pressure from Charles Leclerc, the Mexican didn't put a wheel out of line to hold on for the best performance of his career.

In an evening when both title-chaser Max Verstappen and Lewis Hamilton made mistakes and safety cars kept popping up, full credit to Checo for a brilliant drive in very challenging circumstances throughout.

When he eventually crossed the line, at 2310hrs, he was just 50 minutes away from ending a grand prix on a Monday for the first time in modern history. If you want to visit an overseas race – make sure it's this one.



Sergio Perez (right) controlled the race amid the tricky conditions in the Singapore Grand Prix to hold off Charles Leclerc

## 5 MIAMI GP

**Where:** Miami **When:** May 8

**1 Max Verstappen (Red Bull)**  
**2 Charles Leclerc (Ferrari)**  
**3 Carlos Sainz (Ferrari)**

Max Verstappen (Red Bull) pulled off an early pass on rival Charles Leclerc (Ferrari) to assume control of the race but his rival kept him under pressure throughout. Carlos Sainz (Ferrari) maintained third for Ferrari, while Red Bull's Sergio Perez suffered a minor engine issue and could only manage fourth.



## 6 SPANISH GP

**Where:** Barcelona **When:** May 22

**1 Max Verstappen (Red Bull)**  
**2 Sergio Perez (Red Bull)**  
**3 George Russell (Mercedes)**

Charles Leclerc took pole position for Ferrari, but he was destined not to see the flag due to an engine issue. That left the way clear for Max Verstappen to triumph again for Red Bull, and he led home the sister car of Sergio Perez. George Russell (Mercedes) was third ahead of home-town hero Carlos Sainz (Ferrari).



## 7 MONACO GP

**Where:** Monte Carlo **When:** May 29

**1 Sergio Perez (Red Bull)**  
**2 Carlos Sainz (Ferrari)**  
**3 Max Verstappen (Red Bull)**

Rain delayed the start, and a power outage held up the get-go further. Polesitter Charles Leclerc (Ferrari) led away but a pit mix-up by the Italian team meant he and team-mate Carlos Sainz were forced to queue for a tyre swap. Sergio Perez took the lead for Red Bull before the race was red flagged. Perez held on at the restart.

## 8 AZERBAIJAN GP

**Where:** Baku **When:** June 12

**1 Max Verstappen (Red Bull)**  
**2 Sergio Perez (Red Bull)**  
**3 George Russell (Mercedes)**

Sergio Perez (Red Bull) took the lead from Charles Leclerc's Ferrari at Turn 1. A double stop for Red Bull under a virtual safety car helped them to cycle to the front and Max Verstappen eventually overtook his sister machine. Leclerc retired with a power unit failure, which helped Mercedes man George Russell to third place.





SEASON REVIEW

4 INNOVATION OF THE YEAR: McLaren's digital sponsorship

It will be curious to know whether this idea will catch on – but it's certainly innovative and perhaps fell under the radar in such a hectic year. Under Zak Brown's entrepreneurial leadership, McLaren are

often bold in their marketing strategies, which have included a retro Gulf livery at Monaco last season or the striking neon graphics used to promote a crypto brand in Singapore and Japan this year.

But it was the announcement of a tie-up with Seamless Digital that caught the eye. This cutting-edge technology allows the names of sponsors to change on the car as they are digitally displayed rather than being an

old-fashioned decal. Critically, the increase in weight is negligible, so it could have quite an impact in the future. Just think of the messages that could flash up to fans – or even rival drivers – during a race...



Neon colours adorned the McLaren in 2022



Horner had many curveballs thrown at him in 2022

5 TEAM MANAGEMENT OF THE YEAR: Christian Horner, Red Bull

As Mattia Binotto (Ferrari) and Jost Capito (Williams) have unfortunately discovered, the role of a Formula 1 team principal is much harder than it looks. It's akin to being the conductor of an orchestra, keeping everyone in line when there are so many areas that could go wrong. The bigger the team, the greater the responsibility and Christian Horner should take credit for managing so many different aspects of the business well. Typical example: he needs to keep Adrian Newey happy and so in the summer announced a new Red Bull road car project. He has to manage the infighting between his drivers, fan reaction, political jostling between F1 and the FIA, a potential takeover by Porsche and his main issue in 2022: the impact of breaking the new financial cost cap regulations. A few rival team principals were

particularly outspoken when it came to Red Bull's misdemeanour but the overspend was minor and needs reiterating that so many aspects don't come under the budget cap: namely salaries for senior employees, drivers and marketing. On top of this came the news Red Bull founder and visionary, Dietrich Mateschitz, had passed away. Horner's 17th year as team boss wasn't the easiest...

'His year was not the easiest one'

RACE BY RACE



**9 CANADIAN GP**  
**Where:** Montreal **When:** June 19  
**1 Max Verstappen (Red Bull)**  
**2 Carlos Sainz (Ferrari)**  
**3 Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes)**  
From pole position, Red Bull's Max Verstappen powered into the lead at the opening corner. The team again played a cute game under the virtual safety car, which was prompted when the Red Bull of Sergio Perez suffered a gearbox failure, and Verstappen was well in command. However, a later stop from Ferrari's Carlos Sainz allowed him to close in at the end. Charles Leclerc (Ferrari) started 19th and finished fifth.



**10 BRITISH GP**  
**Where:** Silverstone **When:** July 3  
**1 Carlos Sainz (Ferrari)**  
**2 Sergio Perez (Red Bull)**  
**3 Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes)**  
Following a massive crash for Guanyu Zhou (Alfa Romeo) on lap 1, the restarted race was won by poleman Carlos Sainz (Ferrari). Max Verstappen's afternoon was ruined when the Red Bull driver ran over some debris and damaged the floor of his car. Sergio Perez was second for Red Bull with Mercedes hero Lewis Hamilton in third spot.

**11 AUSTRIAN GP**  
**Where:** Red Bull Ring **When:** July 10  
**1 Charles Leclerc (Ferrari)**  
**2 Max Verstappen (Red Bull)**  
**3 Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes)**

Max Verstappen took his Red Bull to a second sprint race victory of the year, and then led the main race too. However, Ferrari's Charles Leclerc, on fresher tyres, caught and passed the points leader to go on to snatch a narrow victory. Lewis Hamilton claimed third spot for Mercedes ahead of his team-mate George Russell (Mercedes).



**12 FRENCH GP**  
**Where:** Paul Ricard **When:** July 24  
**1 Max Verstappen (Red Bull)**  
**2 Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes)**  
**3 George Russell (Mercedes)**  
Charles Leclerc (Ferrari) was on pole and was leading the race until he made an unforced error and crashed on lap 17. That gave the initiative to Red Bull's Max Verstappen, who kept the rest at arm's length. A rejuvenated Mercedes helped Lewis Hamilton to take second ahead of his team-mate George Russell.





Wild ride: Alfa goes flipping at Silverstone

# 6 SHUNT OF THE YEAR: Guanyu Zhou at Silverstone

The most recent FIA World Motor Sport Council meeting included a change for the F1 technical regulations in 2024. Specifically it approved a significant strengthening of the roll hoops

to ensure that “test loads are applied more horizontally, to require better fixing of the roll hoop to the chassis structure.” This safety improvement was a result of the dramatic – and scary –

accident that befell Alfa Romeo rookie Guanyu Zhou off the startline at the British Grand Prix. When he was upturned, his roll hoop broke and he continued at unabated speed into the gravel trap,

coming to a rest the other side of the tyre wall. Spectators in the grandstand opposite were lucky the gravel and safety fencing stopped Zhou and photographers in the area were also

fortunate not to get caught up in the incident. Thankfully everyone left Silverstone that day without serious injury and that includes the irresponsible protestors who sat on the track on the opening lap...

## 13 HUNGARIAN GP

**Where:** Hungaroring **When:** July 31  
**1 Max Verstappen (Red Bull)**  
**2 Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes)**  
**3 George Russell (Mercedes)**  
George Russell (Mercedes) took a surprise pole position. He was able to maintain top slot at the start and after an early virtual safety car, but, after suffering an engine problem in qualifying, Max Verstappen sliced his way up the order until a clever undercut helped him to top spot. Lewis Hamilton eventually got the better of team-mate Russell too.



## 14 BELGIAN GP

**Where:** Spa **When:** August 28  
**1 Max Verstappen (Red Bull)**  
**2 Sergio Perez (Red Bull)**  
**3 Carlos Sainz (Ferrari)**  
With Max Verstappen (Red Bull) and Charles Leclerc (Ferrari) both forced to start in the pack due to penalties, the race could have been a belter. However, by lap 12, Verstappen was in the lead in a dominant display. He led home team-mate Sergio Perez with Ferrari's Carlos Sainz in third place.



## 15 DUTCH GP

**Where:** Zandvoort **When:** September 4  
**1 Max Verstappen (Red Bull)**  
**2 George Russell (Mercedes)**  
**3 Charles Leclerc (Ferrari)**  
Conspiracy theorists had a field day when the AlphaTauri of Yuki Tsunoda stopped trackside with an undefined problem, bringing out a virtual safety car that allowed leader Max Verstappen (in the sister team, Red Bull) to pit and remain in the lead. Mercedes's George Russell managed to fend off Ferrari's Charles Leclerc for second place.

## 16 ITALIAN GP

**Where:** Monza **When:** September 11  
**1 Max Verstappen (Red Bull)**  
**2 Charles Leclerc (Ferrari)**  
**3 George Russell (Mercedes)**  
Starting in seventh after another penalty, Red Bull's Max Verstappen took yet another win. Charles Leclerc (Ferrari) led the early stages but Verstappen soon closed him down to take the victory. The race finished under the safety car, and Mercedes' George Russell claimed a strong third place.





# SEASON REVIEW

## 7 MISTAKE OF THE YEAR Charles Leclerc at Paul Ricard

Red cars running off the road were surprisingly commonplace in 2022. Think of Sainz's early spin in Australia, both cars in the doldrums in Imola, a double retirement in Baku. But a mini-revival started with consecutive victories for Ferrari at Silverstone and Austria. The next round was at the Paul Ricard circuit in the south of France – close to Leclerc's birthplace of Monaco – and he looked on course for a decent result. Leclerc led the first 17 laps and when Verstappen pitted,

he knew that he had to push hard. Then Leclerc entered the long right-handed Le Beausset, picked up the throttle and rotated backwards into the wall. Replays of the incident featured his radio transmission. It consisted of a lot of heavy-breathing followed by a guttural scream of "Noooooooooooooooo!!!!" His frank response once out of the car was spot-on: "If I keep making mistakes like this, then I deserve not to win the championship..."



Leclerc dropped the ball big-time at Paul Ricard



Magnussen led in Brazil from pole

## 8 MOMENT OF THE YEAR Kevin Magnussen's pole at Brazil

More entertaining team radio now, this time from Sao Paulo. As the skies darkened and the rain started to fall, Kevin Magnussen asked his engineer Mark Slade what position he was in... "Erm, you're P1, mate," replied Slade. "You're kidding?!" said a surprised K-Mag. "I'm not. I've got to buy everyone dinner in Fogo de Cho tonight," Slade said flatly. To which Kev replied: "You are f\*\*\*ing kidding me! I've never, ever felt like this in my life guys!" The joy of watching Magnussen jump on top of his Haas when

back in the garage was without doubt the feel-good moment of the year as Haas scored its first-ever pole position in Formula 1. Let's not forget the circumstances of how the Dane was drafted back into the team. Back in February the hapless son of a Russian oligarch was turfed out of the seat when sanctions were imposed following the outbreak of the illegal invasion of Ukraine by Russia. When it was K-Mag who got the call, the mood among the team changed overnight – and its first pole was the reward.

### RACE BY RACE

**17 SINGAPORE GP**  
*Where: Marina Bay When: October 2*  
**1 Sergio Perez (Red Bull)**  
**2 Charles Leclerc (Ferrari)**  
**3 Carlos Sainz (Ferrari)**

The start was delayed due to thunderstorms. When it did get going, Red Bull's Sergio Perez took the lead from Ferrari's Charles Leclerc and was able to maintain his advantage throughout, despite being under pressure at various points. Max Verstappen (Red Bull) was in a fierce fight with McLaren's Lando Norris and could only manage seventh at the flag.



**18 JAPANESE GP**  
*Where: Suzuka When: October 9*  
**1 Max Verstappen (Red Bull)**  
**2 Sergio Perez (Red Bull)**  
**3 Charles Leclerc (Ferrari)**  
A grand prix of chaos that started in the wet, featured a rescue vehicle on a live track and then it crowned a champion after rules confusion. Even winner Max Verstappen (Red Bull) didn't think he had scored enough points to be crowned as champion for a second time. He led home team-mate Sergio Perez and Ferrari's Charles Leclerc.

**19 US GRAND PRIX**  
*Where: Austin When: October 23*  
**1 Max Verstappen (Red Bull)**  
**2 Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes)**  
**3 Charles Leclerc (Ferrari)**

A late pass of the resurgent Mercedes of Lewis Hamilton was enough for Max Verstappen's Red Bull, on fresher tyres, to claim victory in the United States. Poleman Carlos Sainz (Ferrari) had been spun out at the opening corner, while team-mate Charles Leclerc charged from 12th on the grid to third place.





POINTS TABLE

FIA Formula 1 Drivers' World Championship 2022

POS	DRIVER	CAR	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	TOTAL
1	Max Verstappen	Red Bull		25		34	26	25	15	25	25	6	27	25	25	26	26	25	6	25	25	25	13	25	454
2	Charles Leclerc	Ferrari	26	19	26	15	18		12		10	12	32		8	8	15	18	18	15	15	8	15	18	308
3	Sergio Perez	Red Bull		12	18	24	12	19	25	19		18	4	12	10	18	10	9	25	18	12	15	10	15	305
4	George Russell	Mercedes	12	10	15	12	10	15	10	15	12		17	15	15	12	18	15		4	11	13	34	10	275
5	Carlos Sainz	Ferrari	18	15		5	15	12	18		19	25	6	11	12	15	4	12	15			10	22	12	246
6	Lewis Hamilton	Mercedes	15	1	12		8	10	4	12	15	16	16	18	19		12	10	2	10	18	18	24		240
7	Lando Norris	McLaren		6	10	19		4	9	2		8	6	6	6		6	6	12	1	8	2	2	9	122
8	Esteban Ocon	Alpine	6	8	6		4	6		1	8		13	4	2	6	2			12	1	4	4	6	92
9	Fernando Alonso	Alpine	2					2	6	6	2	10	1	8	4	10	8				6	6		10	81
10	Valtteri Bottas	Alfa Romeo	8			4	12	6	8	2		6										1	2		49
11	Daniel Ricciardo	McLaren				8	3						2	2					10			6		2	37
12	Sebastian Vettel	Aston Martin					4			1	8		2		1	4			4	8	4			1	37
13	Kevin Magnussen	Haas	10	2		3						1	6								2		1		25
14	Pierre Gasly	AlphaTauri		4	2					10								4	1						23
15	Lance Stroll	Aston Martin				1	1				1			1			1		8				1	4	18

Other scorers: 16 Mick Schumacher (Haas) 12; 17 Yuki Tsuruda (AlphaTauri) 12; 18 Guanyu Zhou (Alfa Romeo) 6; 19 Alex Albon (Williams) 4; 20 Nicholas Latifi (Williams) 2; 21 Nyck de Vries (Williams) 2. Non-scorers: Nico Hulkenberg (Aston Martin). Constructors' championship: 1 Red Bull 759; 2 Ferrari 554; 3 Mercedes 515; 4 Alpine 173; 5 McLaren 159; 6 Alfa Romeo 55; 7 Aston Martin 55; 8 Haas 37; 9 AlphaTauri 35 10 Williams 8.



Verstappen: World title

9 DISAPPOINTMENT OF THE YEAR: Safety car finish at the Italian Grand Prix

While positive, the impact of Formula 1's popularity has also had its problems. The first is a polarisation among fans and a nonsensical view that if you support one driver (or team) then you must hate another... You'll notice that Formula 1 drowns out the TV broadcast when the crowd starts booing

at a driver being interviewed. The other impact of the sport's success is the enormous crowds. That's OK when you have the infrastructure and the measures in place to deal with such a high volume of spectators. But at older tracks, notably at Barcelona and Monza, the ingress and

egress was a miserable experience with lengthy traffic queues. If fans at the Italian Grand Prix were already finding the weekend tough going, it became worse when the Ferrari of Charles Leclerc was denied a shot of victory thanks to a late-race safety car. After it picked up the wrong

driver, it stayed out for six laps as one stricken car was removed from the inside of the Lesmos. Critics of 'rushing to end safety car deployments' will point to Abu Dhabi last year... but we've had a red flag and restart before when there's only been two laps left to race (Baku 2021).



Safety car finish in Italy was a huge disappointment



Leclerc (l) and Verstappen (r) battled hard

10 OVERTAKE OF THE YEAR Verstappen and Leclerc at Jeddah

In a season with new regs designed to increase overtaking, it was only after the race in Saudi Arabia that we thought the new rules had achieved their aim. But as we then discovered, the speed of the Red Bull was all-too dominant as the year wore on. But rewind to Jeddah and the thrilling duel for the lead between old karting team-mates Max Verstappen and Charles Leclerc. On the ultra-quick Corniche layout, Leclerc was running more downforce and was quicker in the first sector;

Verstappen had more top speed. In the closing stages the pair took and retook each other at the head of the field, helped by their different car characteristics and DRS. Finally, three laps from the end, Verstappen snatched the lead and Leclerc, thwarted by a yellow flag, conceded defeat. It was a fitting end to a dramatic weekend that had begun with a potential driver boycott following a missile strike of a nearby oil depot. It was a stark reminder of the unusual world we live in right now... pass the brandy...



MEXICAN GP Where: Mexico City When: October 30 1 Max Verstappen (Red Bull) 2 Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes) 3 Sergio Perez (Red Bull)

From pole, Max Verstappen aced the start in his Red Bull to fend off the battling Merc machines of Lewis Hamilton and George Russell. Hamilton led the chase of Verstappen but the pair were on alternate strategies. When Max's medium tyres were able to maintain their grip over the closing stages, he was able to pull clear for a 14th win of the year. Sergio Perez took third for Red Bull.

BRAZILIAN GP Where: Interlagos When: Nov 13 1 George Russell (Mercedes) 2 Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes) 3 Carlos Sainz (Ferrari)

Finally! George Russell converted the promise into a race-winning result. While Kevin Magnussen stole the headlines with pole, Russell charged to the front of the sprint qualifying race and then proceeded to fend off late-race pressure from Mercedes team-mate Lewis Hamilton. Hamilton had early had a collision with Max Verstappen's Red Bull, which helped Carlos Sainz take third for Ferrari.



ABU DHABI GP Where: Yas Marina When: November 20 1 Max Verstappen (Red Bull) 2 Charles Leclerc (Ferrari) 3 Sergio Perez (Red Bull)

While Max Verstappen sped from pole position to a record-setting 15th victory the year, the main focus was on the fight for second place in the points. In a race where Ferrari seemed to do things right for once, Charles Leclerc (Ferrari) fended off Verstappen's Red Bull team-mate Sergio Perez for second place and second in the table. It was the farewell race for Sebastian Vettel, who did doughnut in his Aston to mark the occasion.



## FEATURE

# GOING ON FULL CHARGE IN HANSEN MOTORSPORT'S ALL-ELECTRIC WEAPON

**Hal Ridge** gets an early Christmas gift with a rare run in a pukka World RX racer

**K**evin Hansen, a two-time World Rallycross Championship race-winner and European Rallycross champion, asks as we queue up for lunch on a cold December morning in rural North West France: “Are you nervous? If I was in your shoes, I would be shitting myself.”

He’s grinning as he says it: after all we’ve known each other since his first steps into rallycross in the UK’s Junior category in 2012. There’s a degree of banter there, but he isn’t far off the mark.

The reason, I’m about to climb into one of the Hansen Motorsport team’s 2022 all-electric World RX challengers. I’m familiar with the performance of an internal combustion engine World RX RX1 (Supercar), I’ve tested a few, and raced a similar machine in the British Championship.

I’ve also sampled a number of electric rallycross machines in recent years, but this situation feels different for a number of reasons.

Firstly, while I drove a Peugeot 208 Supercar in 2018 from the Peugeot team that the Hansen squad was partnered with, that scenario was instigated by Peugeot’s PR machine.

To my knowledge, the Hansen squad hasn’t really historically had media types like me drive its cars. Then there’s the fact that the over 30-year-old Swedish team has made its biggest-ever investment in rallycross for the new electric era and the cars were far from cheap to build (and there’s only two of them).

And there’s the venue. If we were at a circuit I was familiar with that would be different, but we’re at Lavare near Le Mans, a favourite for testing among the French rallycross fraternity. Not only is this a rather untypical French rallycross track with slippery loose gravel rather than the hard-packed nature of most French circuits but, for an added twist, the team is running the circuit in reverse because in that configuration, it best suits what the team is trying to learn from its electric challenger.

I see top-flight rallycross cars in action almost every weekend but when you’re watching knowing that you’re



Ridge got his hands on an early Christmas present

about to go and drive the same car through the same corners, the feeling is always a little different.

And I am nervous for the aforementioned reasons and that the primary objective is to return the car in one piece. After all, the team’s Peugeot 208s haven’t been home since the final round of the World RX campaign in Germany. As such, they bear the battle scars of a season of intense racing.

I’ve talked and written all year long about the technical concepts, drivability and performance of the new-era World RX machines but when you’re about to drive yourself, I find I hang off every word.

Chatting with both Timmy and Kevin Hansen in the morning does little to make me feel at ease, the pair both talking about the idiosyncrasies of the electric powertrains which have been developed by Austrian firm Kreisel.

Such has been the effort made by the teams to set the powertrains up and integrate them with the chassis dynamics that to start with, neither Hansen driver felt at ease with the new cars. The cars are much better now, but still have their traits.

But, with having no anti-lag system, clutch or gear changing to worry about either, the cars are in some respects simpler to drive although, I’m told, you can’t afford not to be pressing at least one pedal all the time as then the car gets very ‘free’. It would, I guess, be like dipping the clutch in an ICE machine mid corner and having no engine resistance.

Timmy Hansen tries to offer reassuring words. “It’s hard to explain. They’re easier but at the same time trickier to drive than the Supercars,” he says. Right. OK. Understood. I think.

It’s unusual to get the opportunity to

drive the very latest version of any car, but even more so a frontrunning car from an FIA World Championship. What’s more, such was the rush in getting the new cars to the start of the official pre-season test in August before the first round took place a few days later, and that testing is heavily restricted, these opportunities have become even more rare.

Only six days of running is allowed per car, outside of official tests or events and even then, the output is limited to 350kW.

As such, only a couple of people outside of the 10 drivers to have raced in World RX this year – and certainly no media – have had the chance to sample an RX1e machine.

Gulp.

The 208 RX1e the Hansen squad uses is born from its internal combustion engine machines, but the floor is replaced by an FIA-specification frame that holds the battery and drivetrain, both axles driven independently without a physical propshaft connecting front and rear. That has been a key element in setting up the cars, extensively being able to make each axle do its own thing, which has its benefits and downfalls depending on the circumstance.

Incredibly, despite our rather differing physiques, I fit into the seat of Kevin Hansen’s car and the seating position with the steering column lifted up away

from my knees, is driveable. Fortunate really, as the seats are solidly fixed to four points in the floor and cannot be moved. With the harness also adjusted, obviously, I’m talked through the controls by performance engineer Graham Rodemark.

“The master switch is on, leave it like that,” he says. “Turn the DMS [toggle] switch on and wait five seconds. Now press ‘HV’ on the top left of the panel, and wait another five seconds. Press your foot on the brake, and press start.”

Simple enough. Then there are three buttons for Drive, Neutral and Reverse. The only rule is that to change between Drive and Reverse, you have to be stationary with your foot on the brake, but you don’t need to press neutral first. Other than that, there’s just two pedals to think about and the handbrake.

I’ve already done a couple of laps as passenger with Kevin Hansen at the wheel and Timmy Hansen in the back of one of the locals’ Citroen C4 road cars, and a pair of laps driving myself, and I’m to do two laps in ‘paddock mode’ (limited to 100kW) in the 208 RX1e to get a feel for the track and car. Timmy gives one last word before I head out. “Don’t do a single metre more than you need to in shakedown mode,” a reference to how precious the monitored mileage is in these machines.

The two laps in paddock mode are slow but give me a chance to get a feel

**“On the throttle, wheels spin up...”**

**Hal Ridge**



The RX1e machine is all-new



Hal: Learning the lay of the land





The twin-electric motor provides a kick in the back which amounts to 880Nm of torque in the Peugeot



Engineer Rodemark gives some last-minute tips

for the weight of the steering, how hard you have to pull the handbrake to lock the rear wheels and how the brake pedal feels under my left foot and the throttle pedal under my right. Indeed, you need a surprisingly high degree of throttle angle to get response from the powertrain. The run also gives me the opportunity to get a feel for the grip. On the slippery loose in the low temperatures, that grip is little. And, thankfully, as soon as I'm behind the wheel, my nerves are instantly decreased.

On returning to the paddock, I'm instructed to switch the car, with a rotatory switch on the steering wheel, into 'shakedown' mode. That's the mode that all teams are allowed to private test in, which limits the power output to 350kW (instead of 500kW), but retains torque at 880Nm, 440Nm per axle. Timmy Hansen had already explained that at this circuit, in these

conditions even he can't really tell the power is less than in race mode, it's only when a circuit has long straights that you would really feel the difference.

Shakedown mode engaged, I apply full right-hand steering lock to head back onto the circuit, the driveshafts, differentials and other mechanical components all knocking, an audible experience that is heightened without the sound of an internal combustion engine drowning them out.

Being honest, the more I have driven electric cars, the less unusual having no engine sound has become and as the revs rise, once I've taken the tight right from the grid area onto the circuit and then the long right up the hill onto loose, any thought of the lack of sound is far from my head.

Applying full throttle up the hill on the loose, all four wheels naturally spin up, the sound of the gravel hitting the

understand of the car loud. Very quickly I'm jumping on the brakes into a tight right and I can hear as well as feel the front wheels lock.

Back onto the throttle and onto Tarmac for the tight right-hander, the car carries a bit of understeer on the entry, then after I've given the handbrake a quick tug to rotate the rear, there's oversteer into the exit.

Downhill again and into a fast-but-tight left on gravel, the 208 goes a little sideways, then it's all about getting stopped nice and early on the gravel into the double-apex hairpin at the far end of the circuit. It's very slippery here, just as it is through the final chicane, heading back onto Tarmac and down to the start-grid, the wrong way.

To give a further element to the layout, the team has made a handbrake-turn corner in the grid area and on the first occasion at speed, it's with trepidation that I get the car stopped, earlier than needed, give the handbrake a tug and the rear slides around nicely, thankfully avoiding the large guardrails on either side.

My confidence grows over the next two laps, before I return to the paddock for a debrief ahead of a second go.

My impressions are that the car feels much more of a complete package than other steel-bodied electric rallycross cars that I've driven and while I'm only driving at a small percentage of the car's



The car features understeer and oversteer in rapid fashion



Can anyone smell a farmyard? Our man confirmed his suspicions...

**TECH SPEC**

**Peugeot 208 RX1e**  
**Power unit:** Kreisel single-specification twin-motor electric powertrain  
**Power:** 500kW (350kW for test)  
**Grrunt:** 880Nm torque  
**Transmission:** Single-speed  
**Construction:** Steel body  
**Suspension:** McPherson struts

**RESULTS**

**Peugeot 208 RX1e 2022 season**

ROUND	TIMMY HANSEN	KEVIN HANSEN
Norway	2nd	7th
Latvia 1	3rd	2nd
Latvia 2	4th	2nd
Portugal 1	3rd	4th
Portugal 2	4th	7th
Belgium 1	4th	2nd
Belgium 2	7th	4th
Spain 1	1st	4th
Spain 2	2nd	6th
Germany	3rd	DSQ
Final pos	2nd	5th

Teams' Championship: Hansen World RX Team 2nd



The electric car feels like a more complete package for our man Hal

potential, I fully understand what Timmy means by it being easy and tricky at the same time.

In some areas, the car feels less progressive from a handling point of view than the ICE Supercars I have driven. But overall, it's more driveable than the Hansen brothers made it sound, at least at my meagre pace.

For the second run, I'm to do a launch – one of top-flight rallycross car's party tricks. But with the electric powertrain, the start procedure and settings are determined by boffins with laptops.

Timmy talks me through the drivers' procedure. There's no ALS switch to worry about, it's simply pulling the handbrake to more than 10 bar of pressure, pressing the launch mode, depressing the throttle to the floor and waiting for the car to 'pre-load' the single-speed transmission, like pre-loading the clutch in an ICE machine.

Then it's just about letting go of the handbrake when the lights go green and holding on. Rallycross car launches never fail to amaze with talk of 0-60mph in two seconds, but the sensation is different with not having to change gear: it's like you're being dragged forward by an incredibly long piece of elastic by your stomach while your internal organs are attached to a dumb bell weight being dragged across the ground.

Launch done, I tug the handbrake to spin around and change the direction of

the circuit, and conduct my remaining laps, more comfortable with the car moving around under me every time.

I can fully appreciate what the Hansen brothers explained to me about the car having understeer and oversteer in very quick succession, such is the set-up of the phase-one software in these cars.

I'm able to drift the car more sideways on the gravel downhill but on the second lap I have another new electric car experience. While I brake in the right place, but on a more slippery part of the gravel at the end of the loose straight, the car steps out, in the wrong direction. In an ICE machine, you'd change down a gear here, helping with the weight transfer, but in this electric machine, an armful of lock, a tug on the handbrake and a bag full of throttle angle are what's needed gets the car pointing in the right direction.

On the loose, you can really smell the muddy surface, almost farmyard like, something that would absolutely not be the case in an ICE machine. I mention this to Timmy and Kevin after my run, they both agree and had smelt the same. Isn't it odd what goes through one's head.

What an experience though, not only to drive a very latest specification World Championship car, but to be guided through it by some of the very best in the business. Thanks to the whole Hansen team, it was like an early Christmas present. ■



## FEATURE

# TONY JARDINE: AMBITION ACHIEVED!

*The Formula 1 pundit and PR guru achieved a life ambition by tackling the Silver Fern Rally in New Zealand. This is his story of one of the ultimate rally challenges*



Jardine tackled the sensational Silver Fern Rally in New Zealand

**T**en years of fermentation, then two more getting closer to the burning ambition of driving in New Zealand on the greatest rally stages in the world, finally became reality on the Silver Fern Rally in November.

Videos of stars like Meirion Evans and Stig Blomqvist flat out in their Ford Escorts against the magnificent New Zealand backdrop showing the remote beauty of this magical territory inspired me.

Working for HERO-ERA on the New Zealand Classic Rally in 2020 cemented my determination. Contacts were made whilst I was there and funds were slowly gathered.

In prospect, 1860 miles, 560 of which were competitive over 46 special stages. As experienced Silver Fern Rally and seasoned Welsh rally co-driver Alun Cook said of the seven days ahead: "This is what we signed up for. It is effectively two season's worth of UK rallying in one week!"

Here is a diary of my epic adventure.

## November 14

**TJ:** "I arrived in Christchurch and rushed to the local IT store to fix my blue-screening laptop, made contact with some local media and my old friend former Formula 3 and Formula 3000 team boss Murray Taylor who was my brilliant man on the ground. Later I finalised my sponsorship deal with Commodore Hotel boss Michael Patterson who was equally supportive. There is no sign of my New Zealand co-driver Warwick Martin, team

boss Bryce Biggs or the Toyota Corolla I had hired. I decided on an Anglo-New Zealand team for the expertise in every area."

## November 15

**TJ:** "After a lively national radio interview with Brian Kelly I chase my shipment of Pirelli tyres which are possibly still in Australia, try to track my missing Alpinestars kit sent from Italy but that and my UK boxes of kit, helmet, and HANS device etc, are still missing."

## November 16

**TJ:** "I am already nervous about the prospect of this high-speed adventure across the South Island's gravel-crested motorways when finally at breakfast team boss Bryce Biggs breezes in with the UK delivery he has prized out of customs but announces that his Toyota won't make it!"

"The first heart tremors: I've come a long way and spent 10 years building up to this. 'Don't worry,' says Bryce. 'We have a Ford Escort Mk1 instead.' We disappear into the countryside to see a show-type car which I reckon won't get past day two. Think again. New Zealand historic champion Dave Silcock is at the remote workshop and starts to make calls for other cars. Jeff Judd, who finished second this year, has a Corolla which is



Fabulous roads were the draw

trailed up overnight but it is not prepped for a seven-day marathon. Jeff says he cannot guarantee any components but it is a good car."

## November 17

**TJ:** "Murray Taylor and Michael Patterson have organised a media-sponsor lunch to give me a welcome and send off. It is well attended but with 30 minutes to go still no car for display which we need to logo up. It arrives with 15 minutes to go. I also announce that it is important to respect the beautiful South Island environment so our team will be carbon neutral through NET-HERO offset."

"There are international Antarctic people there, motoring and motorsports journalists, so I fill them in with some of my career info, Murray Walker stories and impressions of Niki Lauda and Jackie Stewart. I meet my co-driver Warwick Martin for the first time: relief, he has the organiser's pacenotes."

## November 18

**TJ:** "We head out into the countryside to test the substitute Corolla. The great news is we now have our Pirelli tyres, Alpinestars kit and a car to try out which goes really well up and down the side of a scary mountain with drops. I can hear Warwick well and try to learn the curious



Crew met each other on event

new notes numbers. It is 1-8 fastest with expressions like 'then' or 'link' which means tightens, a long corner called 'forever' but 'caution' is the same in any language! 'Light' was another new one but it was used a lot as crests were like their snow-capped mountains – high."

## November 19-20

**TJ:** "I am still not sleeping very well with clock and car preparation issues keeping me awake but we sail through scrutineering as everyone wants to help. The Christchurch Race Course start venue launches us into Leg 1 after the team worked most of the night trying to prepare a car in seven hours for seven days' hammering. We tackle six stages, 68 miles and 160 miles of touring (we say road sections) but after an eye-opening 17 miles of Happy Valley at blurring speeds I now realise that the Silver Fern's reputation is as expected but the actual experience is awesome! We have 170bhp but it must have been a rush in a BDG-powered Escort!"

## November 21

**TJ:** "Leg 2 includes the renowned 14-mile Hakataramea Pass Road on this endurance event but the surface has only just been scratched and we have a long way to go. Warwick swears as he is



Ford and Shanks won overall

convinced we were about to roll as the car dropped into a high-speed hollow. We were high on the rocky, fast Hakataramea Pass, as mist and fog clouded our judgement."

"Further along the hill-top stage, having successfully threaded the Toyota through the rock-strewn paths over many fords, we hit a cattle crossing at high speed which kicked the rear of the car high into the air but luckily we land OK. In the damper conditions we made the right choice of the Pirelli super soft front tyres which have given us great turn-in, but also longer life in the damp."

"Welsh crew Ron Morgan and Marc Clatworthy went flying way off the road in their Ford Escort, over a bank and ended up in a field. Ron said: 'I was distracted by a Mazda which was off the road. The next thing we knew we were way off into the field. The ironic thing was that the farmer's son, who helped get us out, works in Swansea!'"

"Our Bryce Biggs-run Toyota AE86 now sounds like an old tractor. The resourceful team keep us going after the exhaust manifold cracked and then split open mid-morning, creating a potential fire hazard and severe loss of power. From strategic pitstops in welding shops with our chase crew, Bryce finds an amazing mobile welding service team who were allowed into the end of day service at the beautiful old stock market town of Oamaru. The exhaust manifold was fixed."

## November 22

**TJ:** "Leg 3 and the Silver Fern Rally is living up to its reputation as the world's foremost historic endurance rally with mammoth stages of 25 miles as average."



Photos: Mad Angles and Geoff Ridder



The crew tackled an impressive 560 miles of gravel stages



Stunning New Zealand scenery was one of the major attractions of the Silver Fern Rally classic



Keeping the Toyota Corolla running

We take on Danseys Pass at 17 miles, one of the highest points in New Zealand, across the rock strewn mountain roads and river crossing. Then onto the other Leg 3 basher of Paerau, the Old Dunstan Rd which is virtually as it was 160 years ago, the trail for pioneers searching for gold and travelling in their wagons. In fact, some of the rutted tracks were more suitable for old wagons and some were reminiscent of the East African Safari with washed-out riverbeds and muddy tracks. A good pace was required but we picked our path. Today we have run six stages totalling 103 miles as we arrive in Dunedin for service.”

**November 23**

**TJ:** “Leg 4: Warwick, me and Ultimate Rally Group boss Peter Martin visit Clutha Valley School to talk to the kids at lunch time service in the middle of a clutch of seven stages totalling 87 miles. The kids get to see the rally cars as they are servicing in their school grounds!”

**November 24**

**TJ:** “Leg 5: we are battling with the Toyota Starlet of Steve Cox and Laurie Brensell. They take time out and we claw it back, then they take 20 seconds out of us over the massive 44-mile, very wet, Stout Road outside Invercargill. This is the most southerly part of New Zealand before you hit Antarctica. Visibility is an issue with no demister, so I keep wiping a small patch clear. We were clawing back time when a gearbox bearing collapsed after 1150 miles! Bits fall into the flywheel which jam the box and we spin. My heart tremors return. “Three miles further down the aptly named Cannibal Bay Road stage,

Brandon James and Dale Furniss have had a big roll in their Ford Escort. They are OK.”

**November 25**

**TJ:** “Leg 6: we missed the last two stages of Leg 5 and sit waiting in the Dunedin motel next morning for news of the repair. The team found a standard box, to replace the broken dog box, three hours away and fit it by 0400hrs but need more bits from a Toyota dealer and grab them as the dealer opens at 0800hrs. We rendezvous 60 miles south of Timaru mid-country, having missed two more stages. Four maximums drop us from seventh to nearly last. We race to rejoin at stage 36, Meyers Road. “Such is the high-speed nature of this epic endurance rally across one of the most beautiful landscapes in the world, that the scenery holds many traps for the unwary. We were sitting on the red line at 6500rpm for minutes at a time, from crest to crest or over the flat. Then the stages changed again as we climbed the Parkers Bush Forestry Road only to plunge down a series of tight bends and hairpins on the other side in thick forest, I thought we were back on Wales Rally GB – some hope! We had completed 284 miles for the day by the end of Leg 6 into service at Timaru.”

**November 26**

**TJ:** “Leg 7: the stages were shorter but much sharper on the route back to the finish in Christchurch. Concentration was vital as we kept pushing to try and get back into the top 10 as we flew over the nine miles of Sheep Dip Road then set a fourth-fastest time on SS45. Then more heart palpitations as 10 minutes out of service we got the wobbles. The panhard rod

holding the rear suspension together snapped and we had to tie it up with a big belt. We hung it together though to take 10th and win the 1600cc class. “Out front, the battle for victory was between New Zealand driver Jeff Judd and Belgian former World Rally Championship co-driver Stephane Prevot in their Ford Escort, against Englishman James Ford and Scotsman Neil Shanks in another Ford Escort. Judd had the edge until a puncture put him off the road and he got stuck for over eight minutes. Ford and Shanks then held their nerve to manage a super win. “James Ford, who is more used to Rally Raids on motorbikes said: ‘The win is a big surprise to be honest. We had a good battle for the first three days and we were roughly with Jeff but had it been on out-and-out pace then I don’t think we could have stuck with him. I was prepared for the endurance due to my Rally Raid experience but not the toughness of this event. There was one 31-mile stage over the Kakanui Mountains that was scary as hell. One mistake up there and it could have been a big accident. I am pleased as this is my first gravel rally in 10 years!’ “What a sensational rally, superbly organised by the Ultimate Rally Group and Peter Martin. My team-mate, Kenyan farmer Frank Tundo, who finished seventh in an Escort and has run many East African Safaris and two WRC NZ rallies with Possum Bourne as team-mate, said: ‘This is the most amazing rally on earth. These roads are made for rallying’. Frank may just help me to compete in the Classic East African Safari down the line, but not before I return to the Silver Fern Rally: it’s a must!” ■



Jardine and Martin in the office at the wheel of the Toyota Corolla



The end of the adventure: Jardine and Martin at the finish line



## FEATURE

# THE ALL-STAR PROCAR LINE-UP THAT THRILLED THE GRAND PRIX CROWDS

**David Addison** takes a look back at one of the best ever one-make saloon series

**N**owadays it seems like a fantasy: Formula 1 drivers competing in a support race on a grand prix weekend and in cars supplied by a road car manufacturer in competition with their car or engine builder. And yet it happened. For two glorious seasons it happened. It was called Procar.

BMW's head of motorsport Jochen Neerpasch started production of the BMW M1 concept in 1978 with his eyes on the World Sportscar Championship that was running to Group 4 regulations, but as the process began, the governing body FISA decided to adjust its rules to Group 5. In short, this meant that BMW would need to build 400 cars to meet Group 4 homologation even before it could then adjust them to meet Group 5 regulations. Neerpasch had a problem, and a car that needed a home. Enter Max Mosley.

Through BMW's close relationship with March, which used BMW engines in works Formula 2 cars and also worked with BMW in the nascent BMW M1 Group 5 analysis, BMW and March, Neerpasch and Mosley, worked well together. The pair headed to the 'Why No' bar in Munich where the gin and tonics flowed. They were three in when they had a brainwave: take the five fastest F1 drivers from Friday qualifying and put them in BMW-run cars to take on a grid based on sportscar and touring car drivers. Oh, and let's run it over a grand prix weekend.

The next person to convince was Bernie Ecclestone whose FOCA empire was growing and his backing of the series gave him extra clout with promoters. He supported it and the rules were finalised, meaning that the five Friday fastest drivers would meet 20 permanent drivers for a single race with a championship up for grabs.

Twenty-five bodysells were built and to take pressure off BMW Motorsport GmbH, they were split between the factory, Osella and Ron Dennis's Project 4 concern to complete their build.

The cars had 3.5-litre, straight-six engines, capable of 190mph and just under 500bhp. The opening date would be Zolder on May 12, 1979 as a support race to the Belgian Grand Prix.



Feel the noise: Procar is go at Zandvoort in 1979

It wasn't all plain sailing though.

For example, Ferrari and Renault as Michelin users elected not to allow their drivers to be part of the Friday Five, as the cars would run on Goodyear rubber. Then, Mario Andretti, refused to race, saying: "I'm certainly not going to work my arse off for that ludicrous prize money." Mind you, he was on over a million dollars at the time...

Eventually, Ecclestone, Mosley and Colin Chapman pleaded with him and with \$5000 for a win, \$3000 for second and \$1000 for third as an increased prize fund, he agreed to race. In contrast, Niki Lauda had already worked out the financial benefits of the series and signed up for the whole championship in a Marlboro-backed and Ron Dennis-run Project 4 entry.

The opening race turned out to be a race of attrition and only seven cars finished, with Elio de Angelis the race winner in

his BMW Italia-entered car. There were frantic phone calls in the days after Zolder as an unimpressed BMW board reflected on the number of its cars retiring from the opening race. Not only would reliability be addressed, but so too would the race distances with a much shorter race being declared for Monaco, round two.

Another problem came in France and behind it was the redoubtable FISA president Jean-Marie Balestre. Wearing his French motorsport federation chapeau, Balestre tried to put the Ligier drivers Jacques Laffite and Jacky Ickx under pressure to withdraw from the race.

"We're not going to support a French Formula 1 team with a lot of money just for the drivers to have fun in a BMW and risk having an accident," he declared. Balestre then decided to switch off the Longines timekeeping system...

Happily, Heuer was on hand servicing Ferrari and stepped up to the plate but then the cars hit the rev limiter on the back straight forcing BMW to raise the limit by 700rpm.

The championship was fought out over eight races with an extra non-championship event at Donington to raise money for the Gunnar Nilsson charity, established by the Swedish driver before his death from cancer the year before. Marlboro refused to sanction Dennis to run the Lauda car as it was in a dispute with Donington owner Tom Wheatcroft and Denny Hulme and Dan Gurney, who had shown interest in racing, were withdrawn as no-one could decide what licence they needed.

Instead, with no grand prix on hand, BMW Motorsport sent cars for Nelson Piquet, John Watson, Andretti, Alan Jones and James Hunt. Both Hunt and Jones retired with suspension problems

and it was Piquet that ran out the winner of the ITV-televised race.

As for the championship, de Angelis won at Zolder from 15th on the grid. It began with privateers Hans-Joachim Stuck (Cassani) battling with F2 hot-shoe Markus Hottinger in a Helmut Marko-entered car. Perhaps not surprisingly the two collided and with Piquet retiring on the warm-up lap with fuel pump belt failure, Lauda dropping out with the same problem, Andretti's engine failing and Jacques Laffite retiring as well, de Angelis soon found himself on the tail of Clay Regazzoni's surviving works car for the lead. Eventually, Toine Hezemans (Alimpo Sport) nabbed second ahead of Regga.

Clay would be involved in the lead fight at Monaco for round two when he led for 13 of the 15 laps from Lauda until he missed a gear and Niki went by. Behind, one of the heroes of the race was

**'The start was not all plain-sailing'**

**Motorsport News**



Formula 2 hot-shoe Markus Hottinger was one of the major stars



European touring car star Dieter Quester was another to tackle M1s





The Procar M1 field appeared at Donington Park for a one-off non-championship race in 1979



Elio de Angelis won the opening round at Zolder

Stuck who had qualified fastest but was only on the third row as the top five grid positions were reserved for the F1 drivers. Stuckie made progress up to third by lap two but spun when fighting Lauda and fell to last place. By lap 10, he was back in seventh but an oil pipe burst and engine oil was sprayed on to the rear tyres as he entered the swimming pool section, the Manfred Cassani-run car clattering the barriers and ending atop them.

After Piquet's win at Donington, he was the winner of the Dijon race for which Didier Pironi took pole, meritorious in that he thus had his Tyrrell in the top five in Friday F1 qualifying. Behind Piquet came Jones and Pironi with the so-called customer teams grumpy that they couldn't keep up with the works cars.

Silverstone was next where Brabham team-mates Lauda and Piquet argued over the lead, Piquet in a works car and Lauda in his regular Marlboro/Project 4 car. Lauda won the race while a mega battle was fought out between Stuck and Hottinger for third, the duel resolved on the last lap when Hottinger went by. Team owner Cassani was livid with Stuck, suggesting that "He must have been bribed by Hottinger's team. Stuck was driving as if we were here for nothing."

In contrast, the lanky Stuck said that he couldn't have defended as his tyres were shot and that he "would like to

know what Cassani would be like if we had crashed like at Zolder".

And as if that fight wasn't enough, European Touring Car Championship legends Toine Hezemans and Dieter Quester managed to rough up de Angelis and fire him off the road on lap one and then crash into each other at the chicane, Quester surviving in his TWR-run Gosser-backed car.

For Hockenheim, Lauda eschewed the chance to be a works driver in order to race his Project 4 car and the spare guest car was given to up-and-coming F2 driver Hans-Georg Burger. The 27-year-old was fastest in practice and mixed it with the F1 heroes and took third behind winner Lauda and Stuck (still with Cassani's team) in his sole outing of the season.

Next stop was Austria where Laffite took victory, initially chased by Jones but his works car expired with an overheating engine allowing Hottinger up into second place. Hottinger, though, lost time early on when he made contact with Marc Surer and the resultant bent suspension caused tyre wear on one side and a loss of pace late in the race. He was able to fend off a gaggle of Pironi, Regazzoni and Manfred Winkelhock and took a well-deserved second. Lauda retired on home soil when the car's clutch failed, with reliability still an issue for the cars.

The penultimate round at Zandvoort was interrupted by a red flag thanks to

torrential rain. There had already been drama aplenty with de Angelis taking off local hero Michael Bleekemolen and Hottinger tangling with Piquet. Regazzoni led Jones, his Williams team-mate, to the stoppage and Jones had an off on the restart allowing Stuck to grab second and then the lead for a well-driven win. It was complicated by the car's clutch slipping and team boss Manfred Cassani was an emotional wreck. Even the win didn't totally placate him. "Finally we have won a race and now of all times our sponsor isn't here, damn it!" said the team boss.

It was a three-way battle for the championship in the last round at Monza, with Stuck 10 points behind championship leader Lauda, both having done full seasons, with Regazzoni just two behind Lauda, but the moustachioed Swiss driver retired when his engine failed. Stuck blasted through the pack to win the race but as Regga and Jones retired, Lauda was promoted to second and the championship. The volatile Cassani was livid until he was reminded that he had won a BMW M1 as the best private team.

In total 29 drivers sampled a Procar M1 and the series continued into 1980, Piquet winning the championship, but as BMW headed to Formula 1 and engine supply for Brabham, the series was discontinued. More's the pity, there has been nothing like it since. ■



Then two-time F1 champion Niki Lauda took the championship title

John Watson: Behind the wheel

"It was a nice car," remembers BMW Procar racer John Watson. "I don't have any life-changing memories, but I enjoyed racing it. It was a reasonably good race car, effectively a modified road car, but it was not really one that in that form could have competed in multi-marque races.

"It was ideal for what BMW wanted. It looked sexy, it sounded sexy and it was quick enough to keep us IF1 drivers happy and be user-friendly enough for the customer teams. I don't know how much development

they did against what BMW was doing but many of them seemed to be able to live with the works cars.

"I was offered a drive, like Niki [Lauda] was in a customer car but I wanted to drive one on merit by qualifying in the top five on a Friday so the challenge was adapting from a ground-effect F1 car to the M1. It was well engineered and a sophisticated road car really. It was a concept copied by TWR with the Jaguar XJR-15 but the BMW was a much nicer car to drive."



John Watson says that the BMW M1 Procar was engaging



Heuer was forced to step into the breach with makeshift timing...



## WRC REVIEW

# RUNNING THE RULE OVER A MEMORABLE WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP CAMPAIGN

**Graham Lister** answers the burning questions of the 2022 WRC season

**T**he World Rally Championship's hybrid-powered era began with an epic battle for victory between old masters Sebastien Loeb and Ogier on a typically memorable Monte Carlo Rally in January.

Although Loeb would become the sport's oldest victor aged 47 years and 11 months in a final-stage decider, it would be Kalle Rovnanpera who would end the campaign as the youngest champion with a performance that belied his age.

The Finn, a second-generation driver, took the crown for Toyota one day after turning 22 with two rounds left to run.

With the WRC's landmark 50th season at an end, Rovnanpera's title success alongside co-driver Jonne Halttunen, which came courtesy of six wins, hints at a bright future for the sport. It all starts again with the 91st Monte from January 19-22, the first stop on a 13-round global tour. But, for now, here are MN's picks from a standout 2022 season.

**'The 2022 champion Rovnanpera belied his age'**

**Motorsport News**

## 1 DRIVER OF THE YEAR World champion Kalle Rovnanpera

Rallying, it's said, is a sport that takes years to master and requires a mature brain to process all that's thrown at a driver on roads sometimes no wider than the super-fast car they're trying to hustle from A to B as quickly as possible.

For Kalle Rovnanpera to have become World champion aged 22 and a day blew that theory out of the water and sent shockwaves through the establishment.

While his young age made his achievement impressive and broke Colin McRae's record set back in 1995 when the legendary Scot was 27 years, three months and 17 days old, it was the manner in which Rovnanpera triumphed that meant everything.

He showed great versatility by winning on the Swedish snow and Croatia's broken Tarmac, on Portugal's tough gravel roads and in Kenya where rocks, rain and river crossings all added to the Safari Rally's immense challenge. He was also fastest of all on Estonia's smooth and high-paced gravel stages and out of reach in New Zealand's changeable weather to take the title two rounds early.

The Finn also showed how he could hit back from adversity after his penultimate-stage reverse in Croatia and his monster crash in Belgium.



World championship winner Kalle Rovnanpera demonstrated great adaptability throughout 2022

### RALLY-BY-RALLY

#### 1 RALLY MONTE CARLO

**Where:** Monaco

**When:** January 20-23

**1 Sebastien Loeb**

**(Ford Puma Rally1)**

**2 Sebastien Ogier (Toyota GR Yaris Rally1)**

**3 Craig Breen (Ford Puma Rally1)**

The battle of the Sebastiens! Ogier, in his Toyota, was in command of the event but suffered a heartbreak with a late puncture that meant he ceded his healthy lead to Loeb right at the end. It was the battle of the Goliaths, which went the way of the M-Sport man to give the Puma a perfect debut. To back up the joy for the Cocker-mouth-based team, Craig Breen took a third-placed finish for the squad.



#### 2 RALLY SWEDEN

**Where:** Umea

**When:** February 24-27

**1 Kalle Rovnanpera**

**(Toyota GR Yaris Rally1)**

**2 Thierry Neuville**

**(Hyundai i20 N Rally1)**

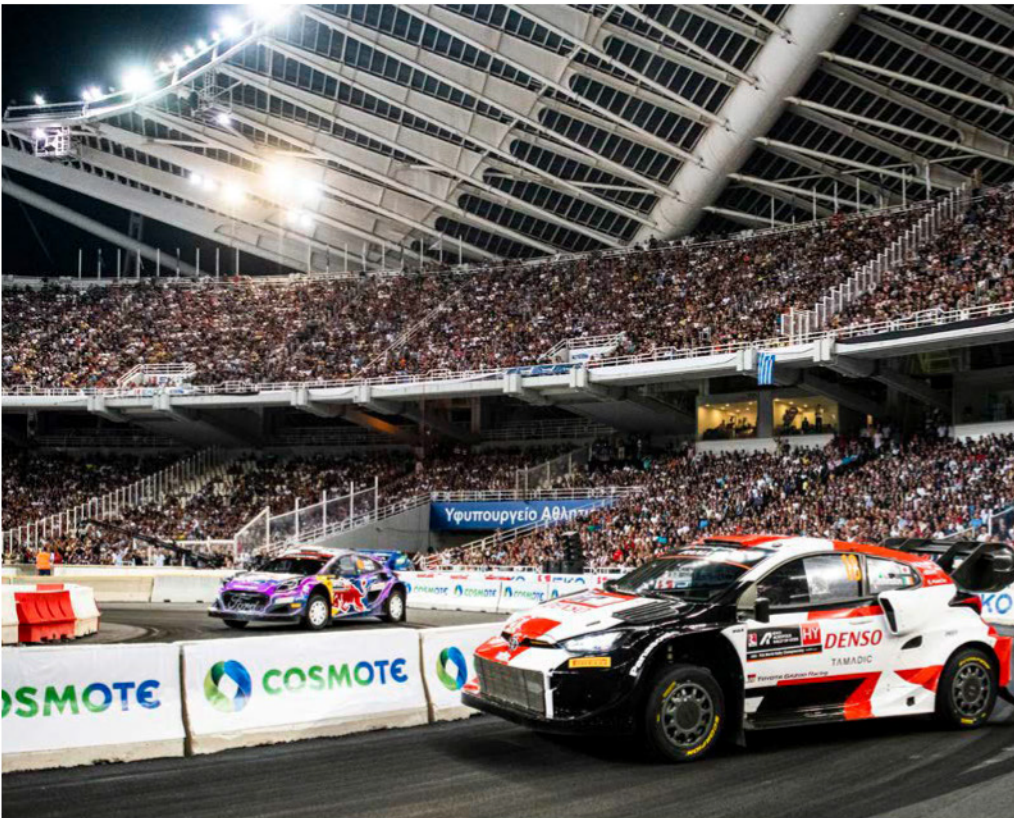
**3 Esapekka Lappi**

**(Toyota GR Yaris Rally1)**

Kalle Rovnanpera emulated his father Harri as he claimed victory on Rally Sweden – 21 years after his dad had done so. Five different leaders battled it out on a frenetic opening day, but Rovnanpera built on his advantage when team-mate Elfyn Evans hit a snowbank. Thierry Neuville survived a couple of brushes with a snowbank to claim second place in his Hyundai.







Some 70,000 fans created an electric atmosphere for WRC's Acropolis Rally opener

## 2 EVENT OF THE YEAR

# The Acropolis Rally

Politics and sport might be best not mixed but there can be exceptions with the opening ceremony for the Acropolis Rally the perfect example. Back in September the focus of 70,000 mainly Greek fans wasn't, at first, on the World championship stars waiting to do battle on the best superspecial in the business but on Niki Kerameus. It wasn't instantly apparent what the booing inside the Olympic Stadium in Athens was for but then a helpful local spectator explained to Motorsport News that Ms Kerameos was minister of education and religious

affairs and wasn't entirely popular with the electorate, hence their clear displeasure.

**'Fans' boos then turned to cheers'**  
*Motorsport News*

However, boos quickly turned to cheers and roars of approval as those in the packed grandstands turned their attentions to SS1. It was just a shame there wasn't time for a few laps and honour from the drivers after their runs as that would have been the perfect reward for the fans for the fantastic atmosphere they created. But the Acropolis also got MN's vote as event of the year for everything else that followed, from Loeb heading an M-Sport 1-2 after day one to the Hyundai team order spat. Just a shame Jon Armstrong was denied the JWRC title.

Photos: Hyundai, Toyota, Red Bull Content Pool, mcklein-imagedatabase.com

## 3 RIVALRY OF THE YEAR

# Thierry Neuville v Ott Tanak

It's fair to say Thierry Neuville and Ott Tanak weren't exactly best mates during their three years together at Hyundai. The alliance between the part-of-the-furniture Neuville and the World champion mega-bucks signing in Tanak was never going to be a match made in heaven. Their relationship had been rocky for a while and took a turn for the worse when Belgian Neuville hinted Tanak's reported transmission issues on the second day in Ypres were anything but. Tanak was hardly sympathetic after Neuville crashed out while leading his home event and when the decision was taken



Neuville has high regard for Tanak's outright pace

that Neuville would not be required to cede position to Tanak in Greece, when a victory for the Estonian would have boosted his fading title hopes, the relationship was all but done. Despite the infighting, Neuville was sad, publicly at least, that they'll be team-mates no more when

quizzed on the subject late in the season. "He is the strongest team-mate I ever had," Neuville said. "It makes an additional challenge for me, but it is also motivating as well." They'll be rivals in more ways than one in 2023 with Tanak returning to M-Sport and Neuville leading the line once again at Hyundai.



Tanak had a grumpy season and eventually found the exit door at Hyundai

### 3 CROATIA RALLY

**Where:** Zagreb **When:** April 21-24  
**1 Kalle Rovannerpa (Toyota GR Yaris Rally1)**  
**2 Ott Tanak (Hyundai i20 N Rally1)**  
**3 Thierry Neuville (Hyundai i20 N Rally1)**  
In a weather-afflicted rally, Kalle Rovannerpa led early doors for Toyota but a poor tyre choice opened the door for Ott Tanak in his Hyundai, who had chosen differently to his rival. However, the mixed conditions meant that Rovannerpa could fight back for first place. Thierry Neuville scored his second podium of the campaign with third position.



### 4 RALLY PORTUGAL

**Where:** Matosinhos **When:** May 19-22  
**1 Kalle Rovannerpa (Toyota GR Yaris Rally1)**  
**2 Elfyn Evans (Toyota GR Yaris Rally1)**  
**3 Dani Sordo (Hyundai i20 N Rally1)**  
A third-consecutive win for Kalle Rovannerpa. This should have been Elfyn Evans' victory, but a superb tyre choice by Rovannerpa, allied to his speed, helped him to overcome the Welshman at the death. The youngster also prevailed after overcoming the penalty of running first on the road; even Toyota team boss and former driver Jari-Matti Latvala couldn't quite believe it. Dani Sordo was third.

### 5 RALLY ITALY

**Where:** Alghero, Sardinia **When:** June 2-5  
**1 Ott Tanak (Hyundai i20 N Rally1)**  
**2 Craig Breen (Ford Puma Rally1)**  
**3 Dani Sordo (Hyundai i20 N Rally1)**  
Ott Tanak went to the front on the first full day, but all was not well with the Estonian's Hyundai. Transmission trouble meant the car was only driving on three wheels at the close of play on Friday. He limped back to service and the car was fixed for the rest of the weekend, and he went on to win. Craig Breen's run to second put a halt to some tough rounds, while Pierre-Louis Loubet was a star in fourth spot.





WRC REVIEW

4 SHUNT OF THE YEAR  
Adrien Fourmaux on Monaco

Sadly, from an M-Sport perspective, several purple Pumas ended up looking worse for wear after heavy shunts in 2022. Having shown so much promise during his first year at the WRC's top table in 2021, it was a shame that it was Adrien Fourmaux who made the biggest dent in the Cumbria team's spares

budget after a spate of sizable crashes, most notably on the Monte and in Croatia. While the Frenchman's Croatia smash was perhaps the most spectacular after his wrecked Puma ended up in an unsuspecting local's front garden, his Monte off was arguably the most substantial.

A miscalculated pacenote delivered by co-driver Alexandre Coria resulted in Fourmaux crashing into rocks before rolling off the road and down a small ravine. Although his Ford suffered extensive damage, the tubular safety cell was fully intact, which was testament to the FIA's exhaustive efforts to make

Rally1 cars as safe as can be. While Fourmaux and Coria escaped injury in both offs, there was only so many spare parts and cars at M-Sport's Dovenby Hall home. Another sizeable off in Belgium therefore meant no Greece or New Zealand and they weren't on the plane for the trip to Japan either.



Fourmaux in a rare shot of an unbent Puma...



It was a season full of struggles for Irishman Breen

5 DISAPPOINTMENT  
OF THE YEAR  
Craig Breen at M-Sport

While there was Monte magic, everything that could go wrong did go wrong for Craig Breen in 2022. Completing the round one podium on his M-Sport debut would prove a false dawn for the Irishman, who managed just one more top-three finish during a season of frustration and failure. Even Breen's big three events (after scoring podiums in Estonia, Finland and Belgium in 2022 he and others were expecting more of the same this season) delivered scant return. It wasn't long before M-Sport accepted that its number one signing didn't have what it takes to lead the team. Not now in any case. Thankfully Hyundai has offered Breen the chance of redemption in 2023. Although it's only for half the events, the reduced schedule might just suit Breen, who thrived during a partial campaign in 2021 and

still has plenty to offer when all goes to plan. While Breen often seeks to criticise his own displays first, often ill at ease and often on live TV, accepting any plaudits doesn't come naturally, which is a mindset he'll need to alter if he's to capitalise on the opportunity offered to him by Hyundai and get his WRC ambitions back on track.

**'Breen still has plenty to offer the WRC'**

RALLY BY RALLY

6 SAFARI RALLY KENYA

Where: Nairobi When: June 23-26  
1 Kalle Rovanpera (Toyota GR Yaris Rally1)  
2 Elfyn Evans (Toyota GR Yaris Rally1)  
3 Takamoto Katsuta (Toyota GR Yaris Rally1)  
Heavy rain plagued the event on Saturday which led to many dramas, but not for the calm-as-you-like points leader Kalle Rovanpera. The Toyota man was clear of the sister car of Sebastien Ogier, but the Frenchman was forced to stop and change a puncture and dropped to fourth. Step forward Elfyn Evans in a rally dominated by the Yaris. He was second, from another Toyota of Takamoto Katsuta.



7 RALLY ESTONIA

Where: Tartu When: July 14-17  
1 Kalle Rovanpera (Toyota GR Yaris Rally1)  
2 Elfyn Evans (Toyota GR Yaris Rally1)  
3 Ott Tanak (Hyundai i20 N Rally1)  
Shock! A Toyota led the rally in Estonia and it wasn't that of Kalle Rovanpera. Instead, Welshman Elfyn Evans took command early on the opening day and built a cushion, but that was wiped away when he got to a waterlogged stage and his road position thwarted him. He tried to fight back and haul in Rovanpera over the remainder but failed. Ott Tanak was the best of the rest for Hyundai with third.





## 6 TEAM MANAGEMENT OF THE YEAR

### Hyundai's Julien Moncet

Tasked with doing a job he probably didn't want to do in the first place, but for a job made much harder by the mess that he inherited and that he spent a chunk of the year clearing up, Julien Moncet deserves credit for transforming Hyundai's fortunes.

It wasn't Moncet's fault that the i20 N Rally1 was so far behind schedule and so out of sorts when battle began on what turned out to be a disastrous Monte Carlo Rally for the team.

He took the reins – via an internal promotion – too late in the day to have any early influence but displayed a steely determination to focus on the job in hand, ignoring the criticism both internally and externally as he worked to get Hyundai's season on track.

Five wins and two drivers in the championship top three was the reward and Moncet excelled by keeping calm – on the surface at least – and always displaying refreshing clarity and relevance when interviewed.

Moncet wasn't helped by his deputy team director title, which suggested this was a temporary gig and that he had something to prove. Whether that's the case or not, there would have been more respect shown if the role was permanent.



Moncet has proved himself worthy of the role



Lindholm got his career on track



The WRC2 title winner

## 7 RISING STAR OF THE YEAR

### WRC2 title winner Emil Lindholm

Emil Lindholm is by no means a new kid on the block but 2022 was the year when everything finally clicked and that all-too-often potential was realised at last with the WRC2 title.

The 26-year-old had shown flashes of speed in the past but his progress was often undermined by silly accidents in heat of battle.

Dropping back to European level and a couple of national championship bids galvanised the young Finn, however. After completing 2021 with a WRC3 win double, Lindholm brushed aside a tricky Rally Sweden to begin a fine run of results, underlined by class triumphs in Finland and Greece.

He then showed great maturity by keeping out of trouble on a tricky Rally Japan to land the WRC2 crown by scoring the points needed to knock the absent Andreas Mikkelsen from the championship summit.

Endless hours spent developing Skoda's new Fabia and the Czech make's financial support clearly helped Lindholm, whereas seat time and cash were a luxury for his Toksport team-mate Chris Ingram.

The Manchester driver was a match, if not more so, for Lindholm but a car-wrecking crash in Greece used up any remaining funds Ingram had scraped together and his season fizzled out.

## 8 INNOVATION OF THE YEAR

### The new Rally1 rules

Fair play to the FIA for ushering in the Rally1 formula with the full support of the manufacturers.

They, Ford included, all supported the new hybrid-based concept and all chipped in with a share of the development costs.

While there has been criticism that not enough sustainability boxes were ticked, the addition of a plug-in hybrid unit helped manufacturers justify their continued expenditure and also upped performance (power output is now more than 500bhp) and added some strategy.

The fact the cars can run in electric mode only in built-up areas is a big plus, too.

But there's more to Rally1, such as the use of fossil-free fuel and a tubular safety cell, which is the result of exhaustive research and helped to keep several drivers injury-free during sizeable crashes and enable much faster repair by teams.

The FIA's rally department is headed by a Brit, Andrew Wheatley, who has followed his predecessor Yves Matton in driving considerable and positive change in the sport.

Like ex-Citroen man Matton, Wheatley brought years of experience working for a team (M-Sport) to the role. As an occasional competitor he's a rally man through and through and takes methodical thinking to a new level.



Hybrid (above) was embraced by the WRC

### 8 RALLY FINLAND

**Where:** Jyväskylä **When:** August 4-7  
**1 Ott Tanak (Hyundai i20 N Rally1)**  
**2 Kalle Rovanpera (Toyota GR Yaris Rally1)**  
**3 Esapekka Lappi (Toyota GR Yaris Rally1)**

Hyundai's rejuvenated champion Ott Tanak took the lead on the second stage of the event, and the Estonian was not to be headed from that point onwards. Perhaps thinking about his points lead, Kalle Rovanpera wasn't prepared to go over the limit in his pursuit and settled for second spot. Esapekka Lappi rolled his Yaris but still brought it home in third position.



### 9 YPRES RALLY BELGIUM

**Where:** Ypres **When:** August 18-21  
**1 Ott Tanak (Hyundai i20 N Rally1)**  
**2 Elfyn Evans (Toyota GR Yaris Rally1)**  
**3 Esapekka Lappi (Toyota GR Yaris Rally1)**

Hometown hero Thierry Neuville, a winner of Ypres in 2021, was expected to set the pace and he did. It was looking rosy for the locals – up until Saturday afternoon, when the i20 landed in a ditch and that was his hopes thwarted. Step forward team-mate Ott Tanak, who accepted the gift of another win. Elfyn Evans (Toyota) kept him honest to the finish, while the Yaris of Esapekka Lappi secured third position. Points leader Kalle Rovanpera (Toyota) rolled out of contention.

### 10 RALLY GREECE

**Where:** Lamia **When:** September 8-11  
**1 Thierry Neuville (Hyundai i20 N Rally1)**  
**2 Ott Tanak (Hyundai i20 N Rally1)**  
**3 Dani Sordo (Hyundai i20 N Rally1)**

The returning Sebastian Loeb led for M-Sport early on until the alternator broke on his Ford Puma. That handed the initiative to the closely following Hyundai brigade, with Thierry Neuville leading the way. He maintained that to the end, even though team-mate and title chaser Ott Tanak was zeroing in at the end. Dani Sordo made it a first-ever podium lock-out for Hyundai.





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# WRC REVIEW

## POINTS TABLE

### World Rally Championship 2022

POS	DRIVER	TEAM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	TOTAL
1	Kalle Rovanpera	Toyota GR Yaris Rally1	17	29	30	30	14	25	30	23	5	4	30	18	-	225
2	Ott Tanak	Hyundai i20 N Rally1	-	5	22	10	25	-	15	27	27	23	19	14	18	205
3	Thierry Neuville	Hyundai i20 N Rally1	11	21	15	13	5	15	12	11	3	25	13	22	27	193
4	Elfyn Evans	Toyota GR Yaris Rally1	4	-	13	19	3	18	22	15	22	-	-	8	10	134
5	Takamoto Katsuta	Toyota GR Yaris Rally1	4	14	8	12	9	15	11	8	11	8	-	7	15	122
6	Sebastien Ogier	Toyota GR Yaris Rally1	19	-	-	-	-	15	-	-	-	-	27	27	12	97
7	Craig Breen	Ford Puma Rally1	15	1	14	4	18	8	-	4	-	13	-	2	5	84
8	Dani Sordo	Hyundai i20 N Rally1	-	-	-	19	15	-	-	-	-	15	-	10	-	59
9	Esapekka Lappi	Toyota GR Yaris Rally1	-	15	-	-	2	-	10	15	15	1	-	-	-	58
10	Gus Greensmith	Ford Puma Rally1	10	10	-	-	6	2	-	6	-	2	-	-	8	44

**Others scorers:** 11 Sebastien Loeb (Ford Puma Rally1) 35; 12 Oliver Solberg (Hyundai i20 N Rally2/Hyundai i20 N Rally1) 33; 13 Pierre-Louis Loubet (Ford Puma Rally1) 31; 14 Andreas Mikkelsen (Skoda Fabia Rally2 evo) 25; 15 Emil Lindholm (Skoda Fabia Rally2 evo) 16; 16 Adrien Fourmaux (Ford Puma Rally1) 13; 17 Yohan Rossel (Citroen C3 Rally2) 11; 18 Nikolay Gryazin (Skoda Fabia Rally2 evo) 11; 19 Kajetan Kajetanowicz (Skoda Fabia Rally2 evo) 10; 20 Teemu Suninen (Hyundai i20 N Rally2) 9; 21 Stephane Lefebvre (Citroen C3 Rally2) 8; 22 Hayden Paddon (Hyundai i20 N Rally2) 8; 23 Lorenzo Bertelli (Ford Puma Rally1) 6; 24 Jourdain Serderidis (Skoda Fabia Rally2 evo/Ford Puma Rally1) 6; 25 Gregoire Munster (Hyundai i20 N Rally2) 6; 26 Jari Huttinen (Ford Fiesta Rally2/Ford Puma Rally1) 5; 27 Ole Christian Veiby (Skoda Fabia Rally2 evo) 4; 28 Mauro Miele (Skoda Fabia Rally2 evo) 4; 29 Erik Cais (Ford Fiesta Rally2) 2; 30 Jan Solans (Citroen C3 Rally2) 2; 31 Chris Ingram (Skoda Fabia Rally2 evo) 2; 32 Alexandros Tsouloftas (Volkswagen Polo GTI RS) 2; 33 Shane van Gisbergen (Skoda Fabia Rally2 evo) 2; 34 Egon Kaur (Volkswagen Polo GTI RS) 2; 35 Eviind Brynildsen (Skoda Fabia Rally2 evo) 1; 36 Harry Bates (Skoda Fabia Rally2 evo) 1; 37 Heikki Kovalainen (Skoda Fabia Rally2 evo) 1; 38 Fabrizio Zaldívar (Hyundai i20 N Rally2) 1. **WRC2:** 1 Lindholm 116; 2 Mikkelsen 109; 3 Kajetanowicz 104; 4 Vossel 98; 5 Gryazin 85; 6 Suninen 68, etc. **Co-drivers championship:** 1 Jonne Huttunen 225; 2 Martin Jarveoja 205; 3 Martin Wydaeghe 193; 4 Scott Martin 134; 5 Aaron Johnston 122; 6 Benjamin Veillas 85; 7 Paul Nagle 79; 8 Candido Carrera 59; 9 Janne Ferm 58; 10 Jonas Andersson 44, etc. **Rounds:** 1 Monte Carlo Rally (January 20-23); 2 Rally Sweden (February 24-27); 3 Croatia Rally (April 21-24); 4 Rally Portugal (May 19-22); 5 Rally Italy (June 2-5); 6 Safari Rally Kenya (June 23-26); 7 Rally Estonia (July 14-17); 8 Rally Finland (August 4-7); 9 Ypres Rally Belgium (August 18-21); 10 Acropolis Rally Greece (September 8-11); 11 Rally New Zealand (September 29-October 2); 12 Rally Spain (October 20-23); 13 Rally Japan (November 10-13).



Rovanpera sealed the World championship title on Rally New Zealand

## 9 PERSONAL HIGHLIGHT OF THE YEAR Veteran Sebastien Loeb wins the Monte

There was a time when a Sebastien Loeb victory left a feeling that the competition in the WRC wasn't up to much and the thought of more dominance by one driver and one make gave little reason to get excited ahead of each round of the championship. But the realisation that

Loeb was simply so brilliant always shone through and it was hard not to admire what he and his Citroen team would achieve rally after rally. That he was in the fight for the victory on the first event of the Rally1 era resulted in contrasting opinion. On one hand the old genius was back

to prove he hadn't lost it and give M-Sport a much-needed win. Then there was the feeling that if a guy can still triumph aged 47 then what does that say about the level of those he's competing against? At the end of the day this was the WRC's all-time

greatest driver showing the new and not-so new guard how it's done with a new co-driver – just days after he finished second on the gruelling Dakar – to hand Malcolm Wilson's team a deserved win after all of the squad's struggles of recent years.



Loeb showed that he is a real class act



Welshman Elfyn Evans needs to rebound during 2023 season

## 10 WHAT WE'RE LOOKING FORWARD TO MOST IN 2023 Elfyn Evans' revival

After finishing second twice to Sebastien Ogier in the title chase, 2022 was supposed to be the year when it all came good for Elfyn Evans. With Ogier going part time and Kalle Rovanpera surely too young and too inexperienced to mount a championship bid, the prospects of a third British World champion looked promising heading into the Monte opener. But an off when he was less than 10s off the lead set the tone for a season of frustration. It took until round four for the Toyota man to finish on the podium by which time Rovanpera was already a three-time winner. His

puncture in Japan ensured a winless campaign just as he looked set to claim a much-needed victory. Evans took an age to gain confidence with Toyota's first Rally1 challenger but in team boss Jari-Matti Latvala, Evans can count on the experience of an ex-driver who knows the importance of being picked up when you're down. As you can read in last week's issue of MN (*see MN, December 15*), Latvala believes in Evans and has set out a plan to help him bounce back. MN believes in Evans too and can't wait to see the Welshman return to top form.

## RALLY BY RALLY



### 11 RALLY NEW ZEALAND

**Where:** Auckland **When:** September 29-October 2

- 1 Kalle Rovanpera (Toyota GR Yaris Rally1)**  
**2 Sebastien Ogier (Toyota GR Yaris Rally1)**  
**3 Ott Tanak (Hyundai i20 N Rally1)**

Kalle Rovanpera wrote his way into the World Rally Championship history books with aplomb in New Zealand. A classy victory went the way of the Toyota man at just 22 years old to make him the youngest to claim the trophy. All were put in his shade, even multiple title-winner Sebastien Ogier, who claimed second spot. Hyundai man Ott Tanak claimed the final step on the rostrum – where Rovanpera did an impromptu 'shoeey'...

### 12 RALLY SPAIN

**Where:** Salou **When:** October 20-23

- 1 Sebastien Ogier (Toyota GR Yaris Rally1)**  
**2 Thierry Neuville (Hyundai i20 N Rally1)**  
**3 Kalle Rovanpera (Toyota GR Yaris Rally1)**

Sebastien Ogier took the lead on Friday morning from his team-mate Kalle Rovanpera, and then performed a masterclass to keep the rest at bay throughout. The Toyota man even had to fend off a late challenge from the Hyundai of Thierry Neuville to land his 55th career victory. A small technical issue dented Rovanpera's victory chances.



### 13 RALLY JAPAN

**Where:** Nagoya **When:** November 10-13

- 1 Thierry Neuville (Hyundai i20 N Rally1)**  
**2 Ott Tanak (Hyundai i20 N Rally1)**  
**3 Takamoto Katsuta (Toyota GR Yaris Rally1)**

Thierry Neuville signed off a season that could arguably been seen as a disappointment with a tense victory on the WRC's return to Japan. After punctures had thwarted the hopes of Toyota duo Kalle Rovanpera and Sebastien Ogier, the Hyundai man hadn't seen off the Yaris threat completely. Elfyn Evans threatened on Sunday morning, but the Welshman slid wide and handed an unassailable advantage to his Belgian rival. Ott Tanak (Hyundai) eventually took second.



MOMENTS OF THE YEAR

A YEAR OF WORTHY WINNERS

Motorsport News gathers the best images from the 2022 year just passed

The 2022 motorsport year was one of hot action, figuratively and sometimes literally. And whether the championship was dominated, as in Formula 1, or a tight battle, as in the British Touring Car Championship, 2022's winners tended to be worthy ones.

Through it all our dedicated photographers provided the images from the circuits and stages, and we've gathered the very best of 2022's shots. Also members of MN's team have outlined their personal favourite moment of the year.

Photos by Rachel Bourne, Roy Dempster, Jakob Ebrey, Stephen Fisher, Gary Hawkins, Mike Hoyer, Steve Jones, Martin Kingston, Ben Lawrence, Paul Lawrence, Jim Moir, Motorsport Images, Ollie Read, Richard Styles, Toyota Gazoo Racing, Mick Walker and Martin Walsh

Matt James – Editor

When: October 9 Where: Brands Hatch

Perhaps predictably, my moment of the year came at Brands Hatch when Tom Ingram finally fulfilled his potential and snatched the British Touring Car Championship trophy.

I have reported on the series each year since he joined in 2014 and had the inside steer on his climb to the summit but, in truth, he was on my radar way before that.

It is very self-serving to think that I have had anything to do with Ingram's journey and success, but I do have a certain element of pride that now -Autosport chief editor Kevin Turner, Jason Plato and I were the panel to select the first inductees of the KX Academy back in 2012. Ingram immediately leapt to our attention.

And he paid attention too. As well as a funding leg-up, the scheme was devised to equip Ingram with some of the skills he would need to maintain a top-level career, all with insight from tin-top king Plato himself.

And look at him now. At 29 years old, he has established himself as a top-flight touring car driver but there is so much more beyond that. He has built up a successful (and vital) partnership with engine Spencer Aldridge, spun plates with sponsors, is on top of all the marketing and is very protective of his brand, and has put down roots strong enough to ensure he can be in the series for many more years to come.

But there is another aspect to him that makes him stand out among the others on the grid and that is his personality. That is something us three judges could never have known about when we first spoke to the then-teenager. He is a highly popular driver with lots of support from the spectator banks and the paddock. He will be a truly great champion.



BTCC's spoils went to Ingram at last



Max Verstappen won 15 F1 races this year, but perhaps his favourite was at home at Zandvoort. His team seemed to like it too...



WRC's old boss Sebastien Ogier honours the new one in Kalle Rovanperä



Tom Ingram cradles his BTCC title trophy





A rainbow greets Ian Loggie's RAM Mercedes in British GT's Donington Park qualifying, on a weekend that he sealed an overdue and deserved overall championship title



A massive crowd looks on as the 50th National Hot Rod World Final is about to get going in Ipswich



Osian Pryce kicks up some Essex dust on his way to his BRC title

Graham Keilloh – Deputy Editor

**When: April 18 Where: Oulton Park**  
“Welcome to Oulton Park Jules,” said our very own David Addison, in his role as British GT’s television commentator. He was talking about Jules Gounon, the GT star who had just started his first British GT race run. When Gounon took over his RAM Mercedes

from Ian Loggie, he was sixth. Not – as Addison intimated – what you want at sinuous Oulton. Addison said his words after Gounon, hounding Phil Keen’s WPI Lamborghini, had the door slammed when trying to pass. But we found that Gounon was playing a different game. He soon got Keen to cover the inside of the opening turn Old Hall and cut under him on the exit then muscled past on the drop to Cascades. Before we knew it Gounon was on the tail of Jamie Stanley’s McLaren, and soon he repeated the move, this time with a GT4 Mustang exiting the pits straight into his path. Gounon, somehow,

thrillingly elbowed his way between and past both of them. Penalties for a couple of cars ahead gave Gounon a clear run on the leader, Adam Carroll’s Balfe Audi, and he homed in. Carroll, despite incessant Gounon attack, held on for victory, but British GT had a new standard bearer.



Gounon quickly showed his skills



# MOMENTS OF THE YEAR

## Paul Lawrence Reporter

**When:** September 30 **Where:** Glen Roy ford

I love rallying on the Isle of Man and September's Chris Kelly Memorial Rally, as a round of the Asphalt Rally Championship, was too good a chance to miss.

Friday morning's weather was savage with torrential rain and strong winds and we decided on a lock in at the ford in Glen Roy for the rally's opening stage.

What we didn't expect was how the ford, normally an easy splash through the stream, would become a raging torrent during the passage of the rally cars as the heavy rain swelled the stream. It was reasonably deep when we arrived but very quickly just got deeper and deeper and more and more challenging.

In a couple of hours the water level doubled and rocks, branches and even a dead sheep were washed down the hillside and across the ford, such was the water's force.

Rally cars through water are always impressive, but this took it to a whole new level. Those who really attacked the ford were almost submerged at times and the photos were amazing. Thankfully, it even stopped raining just as we finished. Given the challenge and depth of water, we were lucky to only have to pull two of the later runners out!



The rain created a challenge



British Hillclimb champion Wallace Menzies saws at the wheel



Appropriate blue skies for Luke Browning who was GB3's champ



Duncan Mallett and Ben Timmons' Caterhams clash at Knockhill



James Golding races a helicopter in Supercars' Bathurst 1000



Temperatures got very hot in 2022, but marshals stayed resilient



The Porsche Carrera Cup GB pack – plus some gravel – heads up the hill to Druids at Brands Hatch

## Graham Lister – WRC correspondent

**When:** October 23 **Where:** Salou

The screams from those foolish enough to ride on Red Force – one of the world's tallest and fastest roller coasters – had stopped for the day and the PortAventura car park it overlooks, and which doubles

as Rally Spain's service park, was slowly emptying.

All, therefore, appeared to be getting back to normal and my focus was switching to a cold cerveza and the possibility that this would be my last visit to rally town Salou given the impending

announcement that the WRC wouldn't be coming back next year or, potentially, ever again.

With my copy filed, I'd already polished off a plate of tapas when a Hyundai Motorsport email landed and confirmed my source was very much on the money:

Tanak would be leaving the team after Rally Japan.

Given his keenness to criticise his employer and the standing of my source, the announcement wasn't exactly a shock, but it was still big news and bigger still because, despite his insistence

that he'd be staying put, Hyundai's press release essentially paved the way for M-Sport's Craig Breen to swap places with Tanak.

A lot changed in the WRC that Sunday evening and the 2023 season will be better for it.



Tanak: returning to M-Sport



Hal Ridge – Rallycross editor

**When:** November 11-13  
**Where:** Nurburgring  
The GCK squad only just made the final round of the World Rallycross Championship, but at the Nurburgring the much-awaited Lancia Delta Evo-e was seen in public for the first time. A modern take on

the Italian marque's late-1980s Group A rally machines, with wide bodywork and stylish livery nodding to its Martini sponsorship, the car looked stunning. But against a RX1e field developed through World RX's first all-electric campaign, would it really stand a chance?

The answer: emphatically yes. Friday afternoon is shakedown, and out of the blocks the Delta looked alive on track. Despite having an identical powertrain to the other cars, it just had something about it. Then in the weekend's opening heat race team owner Guerlain

Chicherit challenged series frontrunners Kevin Hansen and Ole Christian Veiby, until ending up in the wall after a battle with Hansen. With the car repaired for day two, Chicherit would have made the final but for a mistake breaking the car's suspension. As car debuts

go, given the circumstances the Delta Evo-e's was up there, especially given GCK is producing 50 electric Delta road cars to meet FIA homologation requirements. What's more, so good was the Delta's performance, Chicherit wants to build more for 2023.



The throwback Delta Evo-e impressed



Toyota's World Endurance Championship pitcrew and hypercar in silhouette in the Sebring sunset



This year's Welsh champion Matthew Hirst slides on the Plains Rally



British Formula 4 was revamped on and off track for 2022 and a host of its all-new machines were snapped at Silverstone

David Addison - Columnist at large

**When:** February 19 **Where:** Silverstone  
The rain was hammering down. The hardy souls trackside hunted for cover. I looked at my Toyota GR Supra and wondered what the actual expletive I was doing. It was a cold February day and I was about to line up in Silverstone's assembly area for 40 minutes of High Speed Time Trial at the annual VSCC Pomeroy Trophy. Behind me would be Justin Maeers in his Lola T70 Spyder and around me were myriad random cars from Porsche Boxsters to a Nissan Skyline, a Ford GT40 and a Fiat 126. Oh, and it was the first time in 22 years I had held any sort of a competition licence.  
The Pom is a wonderful event. The fiddly speed tests aren't everyone's cup of team but 40 minutes on the full GP circuit is worth the entry fee alone. You meet new friends, find kindred spirits up and down the paddock and even the aggressive pit marshals couldn't dampen the enthusiasm of a new season starting.  
Maeers blasted away as we set off, the Supra coped with the wet, I didn't spin, I even outbraked two people and was woefully far down the results. And I loved every minute of it!



Addison relished the Pomeroy event



# MOMENTS OF THE YEAR

## Luke Barry Rally correspondent

**When:** June 17-19 **Where:** Donegal  
I didn't dare dream about it. I hate taunting myself as hype tends to lead to disappointment. Except all I was told was: "You'll love it." Or: "You've got to go." And they were right. This year I went, and it was anything I could've wanted.

Donegal is a drug but without the side effects. It's how rallying should be. Standing up Knockalla that Saturday morning, I'd been transported to heaven. Noise, passion, majestic views – it had the lot. I was lucky enough to travel to two WRC rounds this year – and fly to the Caribbean for Barbados – but nothing came close to matching the love I felt for Ireland's north-west coast.

The fact the rally served up a truly tantalising sporting contest only added to the magic. It really was a genuine honour to grab some words from Josh Moffett – a man who made winning a habit in 2022 – at the end of the final stage and witness just how much this meant to him.

The only downside? The Nicky Grist Stages three weeks later felt tame by comparison. Dare I even say boring. Donegal truly delivered on the hype, and I'm so glad I went.



Barry: captivated by Donegal



Stephen Nuttall's Caterham Supersport gets some air on Cadwell Park's Mountain in Classic Sports Car Club's Magnificent Sevens



Believe it or not, the upside-down Malcolm Harding continued and finished second...



Jake Hill got plenty of BTCC silverware



The Citroen 2CVs light up Snetterton through Murrays and onto the pitstraight in the 24-hour race



How many kids can you fit in a Formula Ford? Adam Fathers has a go





Dougie Bolger is clearly pleased to win in his first Radical SR3 event



Jonathan Lightbody shows the underbody of his Subaru Impreza on the Trackrod Forest Stages



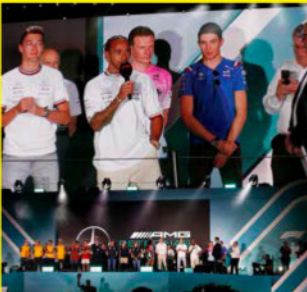
Matt Rivett's injuries were thankfully minor after this major smash at Brands Hatch's Paddock Hill Bend in the Formula Ford Festival

**James Roberts**  
F1 correspondent

**When:** May 4-8 **Where:** Miami  
Formula 1 traditionally trawls to the same old tracks. Barcelona in May, Montreal in June, Spa and Monza in late summer, ahead of the races in Asia. So when a new grand prix venue comes along, I can't wait to visit.

Often it'll be a new country and a new city to explore. Over the years I've been lucky enough to travel to Shanghai, Abu Dhabi, Russia, India, Mexico City and Azerbaijan as they have appeared on the calendar. Now I can add Miami to that list.

If you're a fan of American sport, then an F1 race around Hard Rock Stadium, the home of the Miami Dolphins NFL team, is very cool. And the Americans know how to put on a show. Whether it was the Wednesday night concert on the podium, the fake marina, the mermaids in the beach club pools, the Latin food or the music vibe, it all gave the Miami weekend a festival atmosphere. The US is in love with F1 at the moment and Miami is a great second edition (after Austin) and there's more to come as Las Vegas returns after a 41-year break in 2023. Where did I put that telephone number for the travel agent...?



F1's visit had Miami spice...



FEATURE



# DAVID ADDISON

## A WHISLESTOP TOUR OF MOTORSPORT'S FINEST MOMENTS

*David Addison picks out his highlights from a ram-packed schedule from 2022*



### 1 Gulf 12 Hours

**Where:** Yas Marina  
**When:** January 7-8  
A visit to a new circuit is always exciting and Yas Marina kicks off the season, fresh from its supporting role in the outcome of the previous season's F1 title battle. The venue lives up to expectations when we finally get there. After all, in January 2022 Covid is still A Thing so we are delayed by an hour on arrival at the airport as we have to go through yet more nose-busting tests. Then, our hotel is taken over as a Covid isolation

centre so we are moved....to a Radisson with a Belgian beer bar! The real deal, correct glasses and all. It is a random place to find it, but it is a highlight of the weekend. Oh, and there is a race of which I remember little in comparison but there are 15 cars and, thankfully, two decent six-hour stanzas. As the paddock succumbs to Covid and entries change hourly, more nerve-wracking Covid tests are needed to fly home. Success! Farewell Belgian beer, hello freezing cold Manchester Airport...



### 2 British Grand Prix

**Where:** Silverstone  
**When:** July 1-3  
If last year's event was busy, then 2022 was something else as a combination of new rules, Netflix, British heroes and Silverstone's ever-increasing popularity with fans made for a bumper crowd. No-one went with massively high hopes of a Lewis Hamilton win, but that didn't stop them cheering him to the echo and team-mate George Russell was also another firm fan favourite. Yet again, Silverstone provides drama as Guanyu Zhou's Alfa Romeo headed for the Abbey commentary box and peppers a spectating Mrs Addison and her friends with gravel. Yes, it was a scary accident and not a nice one to witness but spare a thought for Alex Albon who was rather forgotten as he spends a night in hospital after his whack with the wall. Once the race is back under way, it turns out to be a scorcher, helped in part by Pierre Gasly and Yuki Tsunoda colliding and dropping bodywork for Max Verstappen to collect and affect his car, and partly by Ferrari's cavalier strategies. In the end, it gives us a great race, a first-time winner and a British driver on the podium. And a very happy crowd.



### 3 GT World Challenge Asia

**Where:** Sugo  
**When:** August 20-21  
Now, this is a place that is hard to liken to anywhere in the UK. I am in Northern Japan after three lengthy train journeys from Tokyo and arrive at Sugo, which is far hillier than it looks on a track map. GT World Challenge Asia is back after a two-year hiatus and is in good health with a healthy influx of Japanese competitors and quality drivers. Sugo delivers two good races and a strange end to the second when race-leader Takeshi Kimura slows over the last two laps with a vibration. He slows so much that the massive lead that he and team-mate Kei Cozzolino have built up disappears on the line. So slowly is he going that the following Tomohide Yamaguchi slows in confusion so third-placed Satoshi Hoshino takes the win right at the death. There is a real feeling of optimism that the championship is back up and running and there is a support race for humble Toyota Yaris which produces a lively race. Two laps of circuit run. Hills are steep. Great place although I never find the monster that is supposed to live in the woods. It was probably avoiding the hills... Oh, and the beer was rubbish.



### 4 Spa 24 Hours

**Where:** Spa-Francorchamps  
**When:** July 28-31  
The Leffe Brune is flowing as SRO TV plans its strategy for tomorrow's 24 Hours. It is a massive task as the whole production is live. The entry is stellar, and the race turns out to be a fascinating one with the order shuffling from Sunday morning onwards as the leading 10 all have a chance of a win. Gradually, pace and circumstances mean that that number dwindles but with pitstops on different laps, it keeps us guessing all the way to the last hour. After years of trying, Raffaele Marciello finally wins, joined by Dani Juncadella and Jules Gounon who takes a second win, and as ever the race has hard luck stories, accidents and drama aplenty. As a bonus, there is a brace of races celebrating 30 years of SRO as an organiser and it is a wonderful trip down memory lane. The entry shrinks as the cars hit trouble, but there is enough nostalgia to wallow in. Another beer? Oh, well. Go on...





**5 National Hot Rods**

**Where:** Foxhall Stadium  
**When:** April 30

It is National Hot Rod racing at its best. There is a battle-pack for the second place, black crosses are being brandished to remind them not to make contact and the laps are counting down.

World Champion Rob McDonald is away and gone in the lead, but has a Damocletian black cross hanging over him for early contact. Billy Wood and Carl Waller-Barrett have spent most of the last five laps side-by-side, Wood on the inside and CW-B on the outer line. Behind them is Jack Blood, National

Hot Rods' perennial underdog showing mega pace as he looks for that millimetre in which he can stick the nose of his Tigra. You could throw a handkerchief over them.

Last lap. Last corner. Wood goes ide by three-fifths of naff all and Blood has a go, tags Wood and fires him sideways. With CW-B alongside Wood, they spin and head to the infield.

Blood crosses the line but is disqualified, Wood stops before the line and doesn't get going, but CW-B spins backwards across it. Once McDonald is dropped to third for the early contact, CW-B is declared winner.



**7 FIA Motorsport Games**

**Where:** Paul Ricard  
**When:** October 27-30

"Daddy, what are those cars doing?" Olivia Addison, aged 10, is an interested spectator at the FIA Motorsport Games. She is looking at two Opel Adams slaloming between cones. Daddy tries to explain what autotesting is all about.

"Are they electric?" she asks. I confirm that she is correct. "Hrgghh," she huffs and turns on her heels to head to a GT paddock. I feel that my work as a parent

is complete.

She returns two days later to watch the final day of a weekend that was a massive hit. Drifting again draws the crowds, esports draws entries and it is a discipline the UK is good at courtesy of James Baldwin, and the touring car class gives proper elbows-out racing. Plenty come for a day out and hopefully will be converted – after all they've had touring cars, F4, GT, drifting, karting, autotesting and esports to choose from.



## 10 One day, two venues in June

**Where:** Goodwood to Croft to Redcar  
**When:** June 24

Goodwood is busy as is oft the case on the Friday of the event. Elbows out, BTCC PR star Amelia Bovey is leading a gang of us to a helicopter. Yes, really. Those in her Pied Piper line are me, Josh Cook, Jason Plato, Dan Cammish and Adam Morgan plus BTCC media

manager Simon Melliush.

We have two-and-a-half hours to get to Croft before BTCC shakedown starts and we can't find the helipad. It turns out that we need to go to the race circuit, not the Festival hill.

This aside, once the chopper lands from taking some celebs to Glastonbury, we are away with the clock ticking and we are banking

on the Ginetta Juniors test session needing a red flag to buy us more time. We duly arrive and land in the paddock with team buggies ready to take drivers to their cars for shakedown. This must be what is like to be a rock star! On the basis that I have a hire car and it is on someone else's insurance, we head to Redcar for speedway... Beer warm but passable.



Addison's impressive chopper...

Photos: Red Bull Content Pool, Jakob Ebrey, Motorsport Images, SRO, mkpics.net, FIA Motorsport Games



**6 RallyX**

**Where:** Bikernieki, Latvia  
**When:** July 8-10

Rallycross is always something I enjoy. If it's a good race you want more, if it is a dull one, there's another race minutes away to compensate. Latvia beckons for a busy weekend with Supercars, RX2, two-wheel drive, Crosscar... On the downside, our commentary area is a studio so has no view of the track, on the plus side it keeps us dry when the biblical rain hits on Sunday afternoon and we lose two hours as the Latvian track staff pump water off the track.

Rallycross has changed over the years as there is no loose section really

anymore, it is more a case of broken Tarmac or something with a light dusting of gravel but that makes sure that the pace of the cars stays high.

The racing is spectacular all weekend although we lose Niclas Gronholm after a big accident at the start of Friday's final, his aggressor Yury Belevskiy disqualified before he bounces back to win on Sunday. Latvians like Belgian beer. MN's rallycross guru and commentator Hal Ridge and I discover three Belgian bars and sample most of their menus. It helps to null the pain of the journey home as RyanAir cancels two flights on me and I spend all Sunday night at the airport...

## 8 BTCC Finals Day

**Where:** Brands Hatch  
**When:** October 8-9

"Excuse me, David." A fresh-faced young driver hesitantly approaches. "I'm Tom Ingram and I'm in the Ginetta championship, but I'm hoping to do touring cars next year and I wanted to introduce myself." Thus I have known Ting ever since he started in the BTCC and his time with our near-neighbour Speedworks has led to some alcohol-induced social nights. There is one at which he was present that I don't remember. Worryingly, he does...

And finally he is a BTCC champion. The emotion on the slowing down lap is clear to see but after all the hard work that he and partner Laura Drysdale have put in, it all pays off on a day on which he has seldom driven better. A mega lap in qualifying sets up the weekend perfectly but two wins

and a fifth secure the championship in the face of tough opposition.

One isn't meant to have favourites in this job, but sometimes you can't help it. It might be an overdue championship for Ingram, but I would wager it won't be his only one.



## DAVID ADDISON'S WORLD TOUR 2022

WHEN	TRACK	EVENT
January 2	Arlington	Short oval
January 7-8	Yas Marina	Gulf 12 Hours
February 19	Silverstone	Pomeroy Trophy (competitor!)
March 4	London	SRO Awards
March 5	Ipswich	Short Oval
March 12-13	Silverstone	BARC
March 26-27	Silverstone	BARC
March 28	Silverstone	Porsche Media Day
April 2-3	Imola	GT World Challenge
April 6	Misano	esports
April 9-10	Goodwood	Members Meeting
April 12-13	Thruxton	BTCC Media Day
April 13	Barcelona	esports
April 15	Skegness	Short Oval
April 16-18	Oulton Park	British GT
April 23	Leicester	Speedway
April 23-24	Donington	BTCC
April 30	Ipswich	Short Oval
April 30-May 1	Brands Hatch	GT World Challenge
May 2	Hednesford	Short Oval
May 7-8	Silverstone	British GT
May 14	Ipswich	Short Oval
May 14-15	Brands Hatch	BTCC
May 21-22	Red Bull Ring	GT2
May 28-29	Thruxton	BTCC
June 3-5	Paul Ricard	GT World Challenge
June 8	Nurburgring	esports
June 11-12	Oulton Park	BTCC
June 15	Imola	esports
June 18-19	Zandvoort	GT World Challenge
June 22	Arlington	Short Oval
June 23-24	Goodwood	Festival of Speed
June 24	Redcar	Speedway
June 25-26	Croft	BTCC
July 1-3	Silverstone	Grand Prix
July 5	Donington	Supercar Driver Secret Meet
July 8-10	Bikernieki	RallyX
July 13	Bathurst	esports
July 16-17	Suzuka	GT World Challenge Asia
July 23-24	Spa	British GT
July 27-30	Spa	GT World Challenge Spa 24
August 13	Skegness	Short Oval
August 13-14	Snetterton	BTCC
August 20-21	Sugo	GT World Challenge Asia
August 24	Zolder	esports
August 27-28	Thruxton	BTCC
August 29	Oulton Park	CSCC
September 3-4	Hockenheim	GT World Challenge
September 10	Ipswich	F1 World Final
September 11	Brands Hatch	British GT
September 14	Suzuka	esports
September 17-18	Valencia	GT World Challenge
September 24	Leicester	Speedway
September 24-25	Silverstone	BTCC
October 1-2	Barcelona	GT World Challenge
October 8-9	Brands Hatch	BTCC
October 15-16	Paul Ricard	GT2
October 28-30	Paul Ricard	FIA Motorsport Games
November 4-6	Portimao	Lamborghini Grand Finals
November 11-12	Barcelona	Clio Cup Series
November 26	London	SRO Awards
December 3	Hednesford	Short Oval
December 4	London	BRDC Awards
December 10-11	Yas Marina	Gulf 12 Hours



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## FEATURE

# THE PASSING OF THE BATON AT THE HEART OF THE BRITISH TOURING CAR CHAMPIONSHIP

Photos: Jakob Ebrey

After three decades, BTCC technical guru Peter Riches is stepping down for 2023. **Matt James** finds out more

**A**s a member of the British Touring Car Championship's backroom staff, Peter Riches will be a figure much-missed at the forefront of the tin-top series next season. The technical guru, who has overseen myriad different sets of rules in the category since he joined the paddock as a regular in 1993, will take a step back and hand over the reins.

Riches, now 70, will be superseded by his son Sam, who has been a regular fixture by his father's side in the pitlane for 20 years, absorbing all the information he can and learning along the way.

Riches Sr, who previously worked with Lotus, won't completely walk away as he will be retained in a consultancy role to assist the handover.

But why is now the right time for the poacher-turned-gamekeeper to step down? "My original plan had been to stop when I was 65, but that never happened for all sorts of reasons," he explains. "Because we had been through a major regulation change [with the introduction of hybrid systems on the BTCC cars for 2022], it felt like now the time was right."

"We had been talking about introducing the hybrid systems a while ago but, of course, Covid got in the way and that set us back a couple of years. So that meant I hung on because I wanted to see that added to the series."

However, at some point, you do have to stop because there is a life other than the BTCC, as hard as that might be to imagine.

"Also, whenever you have done a major regulation change, the workload declines – now, for example, the regulations are fixed until the end of 2026. That will also represent the end of the current five-year cycle with the Motorsport UK contract with TOCA and the British Automobile Racing Club."

Riches, even though he will now be in the background, is looking ahead and is urging Motorsport UK and the rulemakers to

Future perfect?  
Current BTCC

The BTC rules in 2001 were needed

consider the tender process for the category's promotion, because he can foresee a wholesale change to the regulations coming for beyond 2026. His experience tells him that these alterations will need a long lead-in time.

He should know. He joined when Super Touring was in its pomp, but the high-spending high-tech regs were already on a journey to self-destruction in 2000 given some of the eye-watering budgets that were being spent.

Change was needed, and with Riches' hand on the BTCC tiller, as well as his work on the FIA's Touring Car Technical Working Group, meant he was right at the heart of the cost-cutting revolution at the turn of the millennium.

The BTC-Touring class was introduced in the UK in 2001 and it mandated several controlled parts and restricted technology to get a handle on the out-of-control costs in tin-top racing. While BTC was a UK-only set of regulations, it oh-so-nearly became a global hit in the same way that Britain had led the journey to Super Touring in the 1990s.

"BTC-Touring was trying to

achieve something. Super Touring had died [because of the costs] and the global governing body, the FIA, did nothing. There was a gap there. I used to sit on all of the working groups and I kept pointing out that we couldn't be left with nothing. Nobody wanted to go to Super Production rules – as it was – as the main formula.

"We created a set of rules which the FIA came very close to buying in to. The FIA's stipulation was that it needed four manufacturers and we got three who were onboard. The biggest problem was the culture change from all these motorsport engineers who sit on the FIA group because they had been used to complete freedom in Super Touring to then not having so much freedom.

"One of the sticking points was 'well, you can't make us all use the same gearbox' – even though in Super Touring days, there were only two people supplying the internals for the gearboxes. But then, of course, in Super Touring days the engineers would design their own gearbox casings. In 1999, they were paying £35,000



David Lapworth (l), Alan Gow, Peter Riches and Roland Dane (r) introduce new regs...

for a gearbox plus an average £50,000 tooling costs plus the design every year. However, we brought in a [BTC] gearbox the following year for £10,000..."

While Alfa Romeo, Seat and Nissan all agreed to Riches' initiative on a worldwide scale, there was resistance from BMW which scuppered the plan to introduce the cut-price category on a widespread basis. What it also meant was that tin-top racing was in limbo. "That meant we simply had to go ahead [in the BTCC]," says Riches. "You can say that BTC was, in a way, the forerunner of the [current] NGTC rules [which were phased in from 2011]. It was cost-capped and controlled, but perhaps not cost-capped to the level of NGTC. You could even say that we learned from our mistakes in BTC and then applied them to NGTC."

When the FIA woke up and introduced the Super 2000 rule set for tin-tops, they were absorbed alongside the BTC regs in the UK in 2004 and the two classes ran together, but Riches cleverly oversaw the introduced national homologation for S2000 cars to

allow domestic firms like Vauxhall to remain involved.

The NGTC rules, when they were introduced, were another step change and included a bespoke engine, which was initially tended by Swindon Powertrains and is now tended by M-Sport. Riches used the lessons from BTC-Touring and NGTC has now been bestriding the BTCC for 12 years and has included the introduction of the hybrid-assisted powerplants this year.

So with all the revolutions that Riches has been responsible for, which one is Riches the most proud of when he reflects? "I think it was getting a handle on costs," he answers. "If you go back, it is clearly documented that in the year 2000, with 10 Super Touring cars on the grid, the budget was £27 million – including the drivers' wages. I think the Ford budget for that season was something like £10 million for three cars."

"We are running on under half a million per car now – although I am sure there are several leading team managers who

would tell you that they want much more than that. There are some teams that maybe try to do it too cheaply. But look, we are 22 or 23 years on from the Super Touring days and we are at less than 20% of the cost of touring car racing in this country than we were."

Riches will still sit on the working group panels, be responsible for eligibility training and have a role at the British Grand Prix. But if the BTCC teams now think it is carte blanche on the technical front, Riches Jr has the ultimate resource to refer to: his dad.

"What won't I miss about the BTCC?" says Peter Riches. "It is the stupid phone calls and the bullshit, but one or two teams have been trying to trick Sam already. The [team bosses] haven't quite realised that he then sends it all to me! There are people emailing him about boost for next year and moaning. Sam has back up and I'll be there as a safety net, and don't forget that [BTCC chief executive] Alan Gow will be around too. It will be business as usual." ■

**"It's still going to be business as usual"**

**Peter Riches**





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## FEATURE

# GOING PRIVATE IN GB4

**Dylan Hotchin in 2023 will become GB4's first-ever fully privateer entry, and that's not the only unusual thing about the effort as *Graham Keilloh* finds out**

**N**ext year Dylan Hotchin is one of a number of new entrants joining the GB4 junior single-seater championship's grid for its second season of existence.

Hotchin's an 18-year-old racer with a background in karting and Fiesta tin-top racing. So far, so – apparently – usual.

But there's something decidedly unusual about Hotchin's entry. This year's inaugural GB4 campaign was dominated by established junior teams such as Fortec and Hillspeed. Next year Hotchin, competing as Dylan Hotchin Racing helped by his father Richard, will become GB4's first-ever fully privateer entry.

And this is entirely in keeping with the initial vision for the new GB4 contest, as outlined to Motorsport News by MotorSport Vision boss Jonathan Palmer in advance of the MSV category's 2022 debut.

"It's very important that we give the opportunity for privateers to come back and have a go," Palmer told MN late last year. "The kids that have gone through karting, done quite well, not a wealthy dad but believes in his son, the lad's desperate to get on and you can go and buy an existing Tatuus F4 car for £25,000 running and you could run that car on £5000 a race weekend, to get into a high-quality single-seater championship."

And it was this that attracted the Hotchins. "When we came from karting we originally looked at Formula 4 and it was just too far out of reach [financially]," Richard Hotchin tells MN, "and that's why we went [into] tin-tops with the Fiesta."

But after a "torrid year mechanically" with their ST240 Fiesta, they were considering a move into another tin-top category, such as TCR or JCW Minis. "And with us wanting to do privateering we'd discounted the single-seater option," Richard notes, "and then we came across GB4 and thought

this is a good option.

"When you look at the GB4 package as a whole, the cars are reasonably priced, in fact they're cheaper than the Fiesta that I built, it's access level really now. That's what Jonathan Palmer's done; he's realised that Formula 4 is that step too far for a lot of drivers and that you need something in the middle.

"He's maybe bridged a gap there, I'll tell you at the end of this year! But from a privateers' point of view for the amount of money I was spending at go-karting I can run as a privateer one of those GB4 cars."

"Something new isn't it?,"

Dylan adds to MN on the prospect of him stepping into single-seater racing, "it's just a different style of racing really but yeah I'm excited for it.

"It's been up there [in my view] for a long time but I never actually thought we would do it, I've never come across it. It's always been in the back of my mind but then the money side is a bonus really, so it's just cheap for us to race, that's why we've chose it."

And why are they doing it as a privateer? "We just want to do things different," Richard adds.

"Dylan's very hands on and the concept side of it as a privateer is let's learn the car ourselves, understand the car ourselves.

"I almost feel sometimes that teams, if you are the biggest payer in that team you'll get the best service, if you're the lowest payer in that team you're not getting necessarily the best service.

"So it's very much let's have a go at this on our own. If we get in the middle of the pack we've done well.

"Dylan's studying as an apprentice controls engineer. Dylan's very hands on, he's not the typical driver where he gets out the car, just walks away from it. If you're around the GB4 championship you'll see him actually mechanicing on the car, he preps his own cars a lot of the time. He's changed five engines this year in the Fiesta, so he's very hands on and we just thought let's have a go and see where we end up with this.

"If you look at say Michael

**"I want to be in the top three"**

**Dylan Hotchin**



Striving private  
Hotchin joins GB4

Schumacher, [he] was very hands on, he worked on his car until midnight, one in the morning. I can't compare Dylan to Michael Schumacher obviously but it's the same sort of concept, Dylan will understand the car mechanically rather than letting mechanics look after it etc.

"So I think we know enough about car racing, we know enough about motorsport and because we're a group of engineers that we're going to be to help assist Dylan, and Dylan himself having that mechanical understanding, electrical understanding of the vehicle, we can develop it [the car] quite well."

And this brings us to the second way that the Hotchins' entry will be different. They also will invite to be part of the team mechanical and electrical/control trainees

from apprenticeships and colleges, who will be guided by senior British Steel engineers.

So, again, why? "I've developed a lot of young engineers over the years," Richard explains. "I'm a control engineer myself, so I've developed 35, 40 engineers over my time and I just thought these young lads can control machinery in heavy industry. So if you take British Steel for example we're controlling hot metal and it goes through and transforms into railway lines or whatever else, on through computers and looking at the data that comes back so we get the high-end performance of a piece of steel, well it's only the same as looking at a car.

"And it's about giving the young kids a little bit more of an opportunity to be in that and around that GT paddock, around

the high-end performance feeder teams.

"What we're going to do is go to the local engineering schools and the colleges and say right OK your best guy for this month that's performed let's give him the opportunity to come to Silverstone, work on the car, understand the data and work within that motorsport environment.

"So it's one-off opportunities for young kids as well, certainly Lincolnshire, the region where we live, we have quite a lot of heavy industry colleges around here along the Humber bank. There's some great young kids that are coming through and it's good to be able to develop them as well in a little-bit-different environment."

The Hotchins will get their hands on a GB4 car in late January, while Dylan – who brings experience of

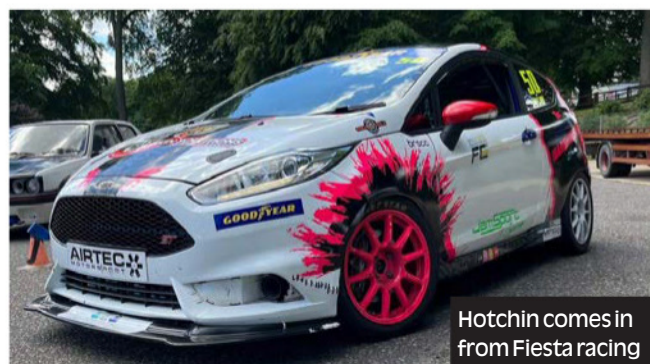
racing directly against Jonny Edgar, Abbi Pulling and Dexter Patterson – has distinct aims. "To come top three," he says, "that's where I want to aim, and just to have fun as well, seeing where you can go and how high you can get."

"All of motorsport we've always done as a hobby," Richard adds, "that's the difference as well, and hence why Dylan is doing his engineer apprenticeship because we see it as a hobby. If it comes to more than that hobby then that's great.

"For us it is about being able to compete with these big teams as a small privateer and if this year as I say is all about learning, mid pack, and the year after is we should have learnt that trade and we should be fighting for the top three. That's where we want to be and it's just see where we go." ■

**"We can develop the GB4 car quite well"**

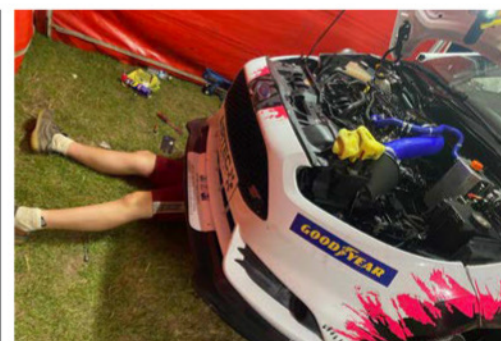
**Richard Hotchin**



Hotchin comes in from Fiesta racing



Richard (l) is supporting Dylan's racing



Dylan likes to be "hands on" with his cars...



CHRISTMAS QUIZ

MOTORSPORT NEWS CHRISTMAS QUIZ

The 2022 year had plenty of action on the circuits and stages in the UK and further afield. But how much of it do you remember? Here for some festive fun are Motorsport News's Christmas teasers

International racing

- 1. By how many points was eventual champion Max Verstappen off the Formula 1 championship lead after the first three rounds of the 2022 season? Was it: 26, 36 or 46?
- 2. And after how many rounds of the 22-race F1 season did Verstappen take a points table lead he was never to lose?
- 3. How many drivers took their first-ever Formula 1 pole position in 2022?
- 4. How many races did Stoffel Vandoorne win in his championship-winning 2021-22 Formula E season?
- 5. Where did all-female Iron Dames finish in this year's World Endurance Championship LMGTEAm teams' championship?
- 6. Which driver took the most race wins in this year's IndyCar season?

National racing

- 7. How many different race winners were there in the 2022 British Touring Car Championship season?
- 8. With which team did Alexander Sims race with in British GT this year?
- 9. How many British Formula 4 race wins did Alex Dunne get in his record-breaking 2022 season?
- 10. How many former overall Formula Ford Festival winners entered this year's event?
- 11. Samuel Harrison won races in which three different cars in 2022?
- 12. Who raced Martinis in Historic F2 in 2022?

International rallying

- 13. Efrén Llerena won something a Spanish driver hadn't done since 1980. What did he win?
- 14. Kalle Rovanperä became the youngest World champion in history aged 22 and one day. Whose record did he beat and how old was the previous record holder?
- 15. Only once did a British competitor finish on an ERC podium in 2022. Who was it?
- 16. When she's not co-driving Sebastian Loeb, what is Isabelle Galmiche's day job?
- 17. Loeb was the first driver to win a WRC stage driving a Ford Puma, but who was the second?
- 18. Why is Rally Finland considered a second home event for Japan's Takamoto Katsuta?

National rallying

- 19. Which north of England special stage came back into use in 2022 after a gap of 27 years?
- 20. Matthew Hirst won the Welsh Rally Championship in a Ford Fiesta R5: but who drove that car in 2021?
- 21. Name the winning driver and co-driver from the Protyre Asphalt Rally Championship in 2022.
- 22. Who finished second in the Junior British Rally Championship?
- 23. Two British Rally Championship contenders had fathers competing on the Killarney Historic Rally: name the fathers.
- 24. Who won the 2021/22 MN Circuit Rally Championship?
- 25. Which island welcomed the return of rallying this year after a break of more than 30 years?

Picture round



26. Who is this making a Festival comeback?



28. Name the three drivers who shared this Peugeot on debut.



30. Who is this?

Photos: Jakob Ebrey, Motorsport Images, Rachel Bourne



27. Name this 2022 title-winning team.



29. Put these four into the order they finished in 2022's F1 drivers' table.



31. Name the rally.

Answers to be published in the January 5 edition of Motorsport News

CAPTION COMPETITION

Send your best captions to graham.keilloh@kelsey.co.uk and we'll publish the funniest in our January 12 edition!



CARTOON CAPTION COMPETITION

Send your best captions to mikestokoe@gmail.com and we'll publish the funniest in our January 12 edition. The winner will receive the original cartoon framed and signed by Mike Stokoe. Good luck and have a very Merry Christmas.





## ALMANAC

Photos: Paul Lawrence, Steve Jones, Richard Styles



Islands in the stream: High drama on the Isle of Man as this Citroën driver attempts to walk on water

# A YEAR OF AMAZING MEMORIES IN STORE

**Chris Tylball** tells us what is definitely going to happen next season...

## January

Following on from the Red Bull Racing overspend controversy at the end of the 2022 season, Yorkshireman John Booth announces Manor Motorsport's intention to re-enter Formula 1 in 2024. "I have got lots of caps – all of them flat ones," he says.

The 2022 Singapore Grand Prix finally finishes.

## February

After from his successful sporadic programme in 2022, national rally driver David Henderson decides once again to cherry-pick his events. He kicks off his season by tackling a sporting trial in Devon. He wins and is considering a full campaign.

After the introduction of hybrid power in 2022, chiefs of the British Touring Car Championship announce a new tie-up with BP. A garage forecourt is to be installed at each venue and drivers will be forced to stop and plug their cars in for 15 minutes to recharge in the middle of each race.

## March

David Henderson is at it again as he chooses, randomly, to enter a National Hot Rod meeting at Foxhall Heath. He wins. "I might have to contest the



Scrutineering made easier...

rest of this series now," he admits.

Ruairi Bell's efforts to score a first outright on-the-road win in the British Rally Championship are thwarted by late entrant Oliver Solberg, who is tackling the Malcolm Wilson Rally to keep his eye in. Although Solberg is unregistered, it takes the spotlight away from his 23-year-old rival.

## April

Proud Yorkshireman Jonathan Lewis says he is thinking of reconvening Jonathan Lewis Motorsport to put together a grand prix assault. "I think I could easily make it work within the flat-cap budget," he declares.

A new success penalty system the BTCC causes controversy in the opening round. While plugged in for his 15-minute compulsory recharge at Donington Park, Tom Ingram fails to collect the sausage roll and packet of Chilli Heatwave Doritos as demanded by the tweaked regulations. He docked 20s from his race time and finishes fifth.

## May

More drama in the BTCC when Gordon Shedden loses a certain win at Snetterton during the compulsory BP petrol station stop during race two. He is delayed while collecting the required large coffee because the automated machine only has small cups. The hold-up means he finishes ninth.

Ruairi Bell's hope of a maiden outright BRC win are dashed again as the non-registered Chris Ingram decides to enter the Jim Clark Rally to keep his hand in and manages to prevail.

## June

Late entry David Henderson dominates the Beaver Rally Road Rally event. He is considering chasing the silverware in this series too.

Thierry Neuville wins the British Rally Championship section of the Ypres Rally in a Hyundai R5 car despite not

S Club 7 reforms at Snetterton in 2023



being registered for points. Ruairi Bell is truly fed up in second place.

Ash Sutton is stripped of BTCC victory at Oulton Park when mandated toilet visit at BP is thwarted by a lack of hand wash. He has to attract the attention of staff to replace the supplies and is still in the garage, as far as we know...

## July

Billy Wood is disqualified from victory in the National Hot Rod World Final when officials decide that his plan of running flat-out around the outside wall of the short oval at Ipswich for the entire 75-laps is deemed against the spirit of the regulations. "I saw Ross Chastain do it in NASCAR, and it was fine there," says the disappointed driver.

## August

David Henderson gets a last-gasp shot at the BTCC as he is named as a substitute driver at the Knockhill rounds for Team Hard. He wins – complete with a full collection of local AA road maps, a 40-watt lightbulb and some Fairy Liquid – as required by the regulations, and says he is pondering entering the remainder of the contest. "I think I could claim the outright crown," he declares.

On the Ulster Rally, development driver Kris Meeke makes a sensational



Who says that marshals don't grow on trees? We have the evidence



A throwback to an early development stage of the DRS system...

return to the top of the rally podium as he claims the win in a Skoda Fabia Rally2 machine despite not entering the championship. "What do I have to do?" says a frustrated Ruairi Bell.

## September

Yorkshire historic rallying veteran Bob Bean announces his intention to enter a team in grand prix racing in 2024, although he is disappointed that he can't use his Lotus Cortina. The 85-year-old, who confirms backing from Werther's Originals, is excited. "It is about time those of us with a cap that is within the rules are recognised," he says.

Plaudits go to Gwyndaf Evans, who comes out of retirement to tackle a one-off on Rali Ceredigion in the new Toyota GTR Yaris Rally2 car, gifted to him by his son Elfyn. He scores no points as he isn't registered. Second-placed Ruairi Bell is inconsolable.

Adam Morgan is stripped of victory at Silverstone's BTCC rounds as it turns out that the BLT sandwich he collected during his mandated 15-minute recharge period only contains lettuce and tomato.

## October

David Henderson wins the Formula Ford Festival on a glorious return to single-seater racing. "I think I might

go for the National FF1600 crown in 2024," he confirms.

Ruairi Bell wins the Cambrian Rally. He is overjoyed, but the delight is short-lived. It subsequently transpires that he hadn't filled in his championship entry form properly and therefore is not registered for points, handing the round victory and the crown to Eamonn Kelly.

Jake Hill is proved as the cutest BTCC driver of all. At the final rounds at Brands Hatch, he turns out he has been the only one who registered for a BPme Rewards loyalty card. That gives him an extra 30 championship points, and it is enough for the crown.

## November

Returnee Roberto Moreno wins the Walter Hayes Trophy FF1600 final from Tommy Byrne and Rick Morris. It's 1980 all over again!

Ruairi Bell wins the Roger Albert Clark Rally but is disqualified at post-event scrutineering for not having a bobble hat in the car along with a warning triangle and flask of tea. He is defeated by one-off entrant Oliver Solberg.

## December

David Henderson has to move house as he has not got enough room for all of his 2022 trophies. ■

\* All information definitely not correct at time of going to press



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# WHAT'S ON

## YOUTUBE REVIEW

In this week's Motorsport News David Addison gives us the lowdown on the magnificent oddity from four decades ago: the BMW M1 Procar championship. It (mainly) supported Formula 1 grands prix and put contemporary F1 stars, and plenty other luminaries besides, behind the wheel of the identical sportscars

to entertain us with frantic race battles.

And thanks to YouTube, combined with someone striking gold with a VHS tape bought on eBay, we can watch all of a Procar race, to which Addison refers, shown live by ITV. It's 1979's charity non-championship Donington Park race, the Gunnar Nilsson Memorial Trophy

remembering the F1 racer who'd recently died of cancer aged 29.

We see ITV's full coverage of the event, and immediately discover how star-studded it is as Jackie Stewart and George Harrison are interviewed, and they mention that even Juan Manuel Fangio is in attendance.

Vast crowds see a race line-up including James Hunt, Mario

Andretti, Alan Jones and Nelson Piquet, and all clearly try as hard – or harder – as they would in an actual grand prix. MN man Andrew Marriott provides authoritative commentary. You can watch 55 minutes, with pre and post coverage as well as the full race, at: youtube.com/watch?v=iv7E6eb9KqM.

**Graham Keilloh**



Recalling the BMW Procars

## TV GUIDE



BTCC: A festive telly treat

Sky Sports F1 has a 90-minute review programme of this year's Formula 1 season for your Festive entertainment. It's on the channel on Christmas Eve morning at 1030hrs-1200hrs, again that evening at 2000hrs-2130hrs then is shown on Christmas Day at 1200hrs-1330hrs.

If you're up early on Christmas morning to open your presents, then ITV4 has motorsport accompaniment for you from 0600hrs. First at 0600hrs-0630hrs

there's Extreme E: Electric Odyssey promising insight into the series, followed by a season review at 0630hrs-0730hrs.

After that is Motorsport UK at 0730hrs-0835hrs showing Ginetta Junior and Mini Challenge from Brands Hatch supporting the BTCC. And at 0835hrs-0905hrs there's more motorsport action in Motorsport Mundial.

ITV4 continues in a similar vein on Boxing Day morning with the best of this year's Goodwood

action. There's highlights of the Members' Meeting at 0815hrs-0910hrs, then it is two hours of the best of the Festival of Speed at 0910hrs-1110hrs, and it concludes with the best of the Revival at 1110hrs-1215hrs.

Many of ITV4's highlights are shown again in Tuesday December 27's small hours, then at 1000hrs-1210hrs that day on the channel you can watch a season review of this year's BTCC.

**Graham Keilloh**

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**ART EDITOR MIKE STOKOE'S FAVOURITE OF THE WEEK!**



Rich Cranston caught the final test session of the season from Donington Park recently



Jake Hill in testing mode, also by Rich Cranston



Classic action from Mike Griffin



Gary Hill's shot of Colin Mck...



A glorious sportscar throwback at Dubai, taken by Dean Chilvers

## NEXT EDITION

**OUT THURSDAY, JANUARY 5, 2023**

## WE COUNT DOWN THE TOP 50 DEFINING MOMENTS OF 2022



*We look back at the incidents and action that signed off the season just gone*

## WE SALUTE THE BIG ACHIEVEMENTS ON THE SHORT OVALS IN 2022

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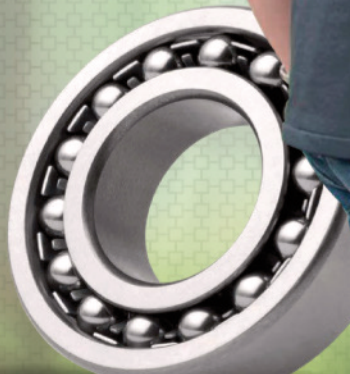
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